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FEBRUARY 1951

# THE CRESSET

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, THE ARTS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS



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THIRTY-FIVE CENTS

# THE CRESSET

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## *IN THE FEBRUARY CRESSET:*



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THE CRESSET

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# Notes and Comment

BY THE EDITORS

## Ash Wednesday

OUR deadlines are such that we must write about the beginning of Lent on the same day we decorate the Christmas tree. The glad songs of angel hosts blend with the angry cries of the Jerusalem mob, and the trunk of the brightly lighted tree stands as a silent reminder that a tree can be both beautiful and shameful, depending upon what men hang upon it.

And so our deadlines remind us that Christmas has a reverse face. Joy to the world is possible only through the suffering of the Child Whose birth Christmas celebrates. The hopes and fears of all the years meet in the little town of Bethlehem only because Bethlehem is the beginning of the battle through which hope triumphed over fear. The good will which the angels sing had to be bought for men by One Whose voice cried through the dark, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Perhaps such thoughts as these are out of place in a "review of literature, the arts, and current affairs." But perhaps, in such times as these, nothing is quite so current as the problems of sin and justice and atonement upon which Lent focuses our attention. It is sin which brings our Lord to His Gethsemane and thousands of the young men of our generation to their own hidden gethsemanes. It is justice that demands that our Lord's body be given into death for our sins and it is the same justice, not punitive nor merciless but gracious beyond our understanding, that still warns our errant world that without

blood there is no remission of sin. And it is atonement that both we as individuals and our world as a community need above all else.

Abraham Lincoln understood all of what we have been trying to say perhaps more clearly than any other of our national leaders. He recognized war, in his second inaugural address, as "the woe due to those by whom the offense came" and as the instrument through which He removes the offense. The watered-down, service-club Christianity of our generation has forgotten that the gentle Jesus Who sleeps so peacefully in His mother's arms grew up to wield a lash in the temple and to warn the softies of His generation that He had come not to send peace but a sword. The Jesus of the beatitudes is the Son of the Yahweh of Sinai.

Our age, then, if it is truly interested in finding healing, can have it if it will lay aside its pride and malice and stubbornness and will seal forehead and heart with penitential ash. Or it can have more of what it has now.

## Criticism and Subversion

IN ANY time of national emergency, the conscientious reporter or critic is torn between two voices. The one is that of the state and of public opinion and it tells him, "This much you may say—and no more." The other is that of his conscience and it tells him "This much you must say—and no less."

If the choice were simply one of choosing to act according to conscience or in opposition to it, there would be no difficulty. But conscience is not an infallible guide and anyone who is aware of his own weaknesses must be troubled by doubts as to how far he may go in opposing his individual conscience to the conscience of the collective as it is reflected in public opinion and in emergency rules and regulations.

And another consideration enters the picture also. Unless the United States of America is the New Jerusalem prophesied in the Book of Revelation, it is certainly probable that we have contributed our share to the development of the present world situation. To pretend that we are little white woolly lambs upon whom the wolves have descended is both poor theology and poor history. But at what point does the healing medicine of criticism become the poison of subversion? For us that is a most disturbing question because we believe that the most pressing need of our country is a serious self-examination followed

by repentance and conversion. When we call attention to our country's sins, we do so in love and in the hope of contributing to her welfare. Unfortunately, the same sins which we expose out of love for our country are being exposed by those who hate her. And since the exposure of sin is never calculated to make one popular, we face the danger of being labeled subversive.

This whole question was raised for us by the chance remark of a radio commentator that one of the major problems in Washington is that of finding ways to "mobilize public opinion." Our dictionary says that to mobilize is "to assemble and put in a state of readiness for active service in war." We want to know what Washington understands by the mobilization of opinion, who is going to decide what opinion to mobilize, how clear the distinction will be between criticism and subversion, and what scope will be permitted the individual conscience in making its contribution to the welfare of our country. It must be remembered that a little club-footed man named Joseph Goebbels once held the post of mobilizer of public opinion and that the nation he served in that post is still trying to dig out of the physical and moral rubble.

## Help Needed

THE increasing irascibility of President Truman, reflected most clearly in his numerous oral and written displays of temper these past six months, provides reason for genuine concern.

Mr. Truman is, as presumably everyone must know by now, a man of extremely modest ability. The office which he holds demands super-human wisdom, energy, and courage. The American people are a cantankerous boss or, rather, 150,000,000 cantankerous bosses, each of them sure that he could run the country better than it is being run.

Add to this the venality of certain segments of the press and top that off with an attempted assassination and the death of a close personal friend and it is not hard to see how this little man in the enormous job would begin showing the strain. The surprising thing is that the man has not collapsed completely.

This is not meant as a whitewash of the President nor does it imply any approval of what he has done. We thought in 1948 and we still think that he was not a big enough man for the job. But the point is that he holds the job, and he holds it by vote of a majority of the people who voted in the 1948 election, and he deserves all of the support we can give him.

And while we are on the subject of the presidency, we might say that it seems to us that before long we shall have to re-examine the job and see whether we can not devise some way of whittling down the President's duties to one-man size. Through the years, and especially since the great depression, the job has grown to the point where no one man can do it right. We expect our President to be an astute politician, a profound statesman, an engaging radio and television personality, a social arbiter, a public relations expert, and a father-confessor to any citizen who wants to sit down and tell him his troubles. Perhaps it was possible for one man to be all of that back in the days when our nation was a comfortable little agricultural society out on the edge of the world. It certainly is not possible for him to be all of that in these days when the problems of the whole world are the problems of the President.

For the moment, we have more important things to do than re-examine the duties of the President. But we can ease his burden by engaging only in constructive criticism, by overlooking as far as possible his human weaknesses, and by interceding for him in our prayers. For all citizens, this would be the decent thing to do. For the Christian citizen, it is mandatory.



## The NCCC

THESE next paragraphs represent our fourth attempt to comment on the formation of the new National Council of the Churches of Christ.

There are two thoughts that we want to get out somewhere in the course of our comments. We are, first of all, happy that the uncharitable exclusiveness of an earlier day has been supplanted by a spirit of mutual forbearance and understanding and by a willingness to cooperate in those areas within which Protestants of all denominations are in essential agreement.

On the other hand, we are disturbed by two fears. In our report of the organizing convention, we were struck by the numerous references to the 31-odd million constituency of the new organization and we find ourselves wondering how long it will be before the Council or one of its agencies will begin throwing the implied endorsement of this 31-million bloc to this or that side of questions which lie beyond the proper area of their interest. It is bad enough having Spellman to contend with without providing some potential Protestant Spellman with such a

ready-made pressure bloc. Nor do we think that these fears are premature, for the old Federal Council had a way of shooting off its mouth every now and then on issues which it saw through a class darkly and the Federal Council is, if not mother, at least a close blood relative to the new National Council.

The second fear is that the new Council will further the heresy that has blighted contemporary Protestantism and made it so ineffective in our time, the heresy of superorganization. Here again, we derive no consolation from the report of the organizing convention. Even the *Christian Century,* which has taken the Council under its wing like an over-maternal hen, had to admit that it could not unravel all of the complexity of its make-up and yet devoted two pages to an explanation of what it could understand and suspects that "it will be some time before each staff member knows where each working unit fits into the whole coordinated and intricate pattern." This tendency of Protestants to substitute organization for the proclamation of the Christian gospel is one of the reasons why Protestantism is in its present sorry mess.

We hope that neither of these fears will be justified by events and that the National Council will prove an effective means of furthering the gospel of Christ. It is essential that the searching souls of the twentieth century be offered some better alternative to the authoritarian doctrines of pagan secularism than the equally authoritarian dogmas of Roman Catholicism. All of the Protestant bodies share, in greater or lesser degree, the great evangelical heritage of the Reformation with its emphasis upon the universal priesthood of all believers. If, through the new National Council, that heritage can be extended to more and more people, the organizational convention in snowbound Cleveland last December may be remembered as one of the great events of an otherwise unhappy year.



## Nobody Immune

COMES now a study by Drs. N. K. Rickles, J. J. Klein, and M. E. Bassan which refutes the old idea that you have to be wealthy to be mentally upset.

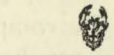
After studying a hundred typical psychiatric patients, the doctors found that most of the patients were of average means and that their complaints were not reflective of any particular economic or social problem. Most of the patients were simply "nervous," a

layman's term which covers almost anything from relatively simple confusions to deep-seated tensions and frustrations.

It is easy to write such people off as weaklings who need nothing but a little backbone and discipline. That is, as a matter of fact, the kind of treatment many so-called "healthy" people would prescribe for them even today. At the other extreme, it is just as easy to gush all over them and even to make psychiatric problems out of people who have nothing worse than normal human laziness and cussedness wrong with them. It is hard, very hard, to give the really disturbed person the kind of treatment he needs and one of the cruelest rackets flourishing in our country today is that of the psychiatric quack who finds tortured hearts and minds easy touches for a fast buck.

Despite the fact that much of modern psychiatry and psychotherapy has been un-Christian if not actually anti-Christian, we recognize the tremendous potential value of those fields and heartily approve any programs for making their healing gifts available to the great numbers of men and women who need them. There is hardly a town or village in the United States which does not have as many mentally sick people as physically sick. In years to come, the situation will not improve for even if no other factors complicated the picture there would still be the factor of longer life span with the tensions and confusions and distresses that go with long life.

Perhaps we shall live to see the day when the psychiatric clinic will be as common a part of the city landscape as the hospitals are today. Let us hope that in this area of mercy, too, the churches will take the lead. Certainly it would be an area in which they could offer much, because even the pagan psychiatrist admits that many a case of what appears at first to be a diseased mind turns out after closer examination to be a diseased soul.



## A-Bomb Morality

Now that the question of the morality of using the atom bomb has moved from the area of academic discussion to the area of immediate decision, it might be well to examine the answers that have been suggested. Such an examination indicates that the following conclusions have been reached by thoughtful people:

1. That the use of the bomb, for whatever purpose and in whatever situation, is intrinsically immoral and cannot be justified;

2. That self-preservation is the highest moral principle and that the use of any weapon is justified if employed in self-preservation;

3. That the use of a weapon, even in self-preservation, is limited morally by the urgency of the situation and by the effectiveness of alternative weapons.

The first two conclusions present categorical answers and require little discussion. One either accepts them or rejects them. The third conclusion is much more difficult to phrase properly and demands some consideration.

It is the contention of those who have arrived at this third conclusion that the end determines and limits the means. Thus if a policeman is pursuing an escaping bank-robber, he is not justified morally in shooting the robber through the head if he can arrest his escape by shooting him through a leg. In warfare, a nation is not justified morally in annihilating an enemy if it can bring its enemy to terms with less destruction and loss of life. The destruction of a whole city to knock out its railroad station would, in the thinking of these people, be morally wrong because the means far exceeded the necessity determined by the end.

We must admit a leaning toward this view. We favor it even though it is the hardest of the three views to translate into immediate, practical answers. It will not, for instance, automatically answer a question such as, "Shall we drop the A-bomb on Shanghai?" The answer in any given situation will have to be found by accurate appraisal of the military situation, by examination of alternative weapons that might be employed to achieve the same strategic ends, by serious study of the urgency of the situation, and by much heart-searching balancing of human life against national survival.

And we would go even further than any publication we have read in stating our own view of the morality of using the A-bomb. We would say that the bomb can be used with good conscience only if it can be used in love. That sounds, we suppose, like a categorical prohibition of the bomb's use but we do not think that that necessarily follows. If we are fighting for any other reason than to prevent our enemies from following evil ways which will destroy both us and them, we have no business fighting at all. Even self-survival is not a sufficient reason unless our survival is necessary for the good of all mankind, including our enemies.

If the bomb is used, then, it must be used penitently, regretfully, and after much prayer. It

must be used not so much for our sake as for the sake of the nation upon which it is dropped. It must be used as the surgeon's scalpel—not to destroy life but to save it. And if it is thus used, the merciful God Who chastises most sorely those whom He loves best will forgive us.

## Youth Speaks

WE SUSPECT that when the White House conference on children and youth meets next year the directors will not repeat their mistake of this year in inviting youth leaders to attend. Not after what happened this year.

There was, first of all, a wee wisp of a lassie named Sarah Edmonds who followed up President Truman's warning to young people that they might as well get used to the idea of doing a hitch in the armed services with an impassioned plea for peace. "God won't let us go to war," Sarah said, "if we all stand up and fight for peace. No one can make us go to war! It seems to me that there's no organization acting for peace." That brought heavy applause from the young people.

Then there was the unidentified Southern Negro boy who put the conference on the spot with his as-yet-unanswered question: "What are children supposed to have healthy personalities for? To make better food for cannons? We want healthy personalities not to become the pawns of government but because the right to healthy personalities has been given to us by God." Little weak theologically, maybe, but a lot sounder than much of the ring-around-a-rosy stuff that the older people at the conference were saying and writing into resolutions, especially on the subject of religion in education.

And then there was a young man from the Dearborn, Michigan, Y.M.C.A., named Gordon Lambie. Gordon, in addition to possessing a sharply penetrating mind, has the rare gift of understatement. Commenting on the racial prejudice that he found in Washington and that made it necessary for some of the delegates to be housed at Ft. Meyer, Va., Gordon remarked that "this matter of delegates being barred from restaurants in the District of Columbia is a strange commentary on the democratic processes." Strange is right!

Now of course it is one thing to be young and unfettered by restrictions of official position and "practical considerations." It is something else to be middle-aged and honestly perplexed and per-

haps somewhat disillusioned and certainly very much aware of the difficulties of translating ideals into policies. Miss Edmonds will learn someday that organizations cannot make peace and the Negro boy from Down South will not be so sure that we have a divine right to healthy personalities and Gordon Lambie will find that segregation of races is not the only strange situation which exists within our democracy. But the learning of all of these things will be, like the decaying of their teeth and the whitening of their hair, a part of the process of dying.

That is, perhaps, the chief reason why we who are farther along in years resent youth. The fresh odor of life which they bring into our death-marked meetings is an affront and an accusation. We want to believe and say and be what these young people believe and say and are—and what we once believed and said and were. But the road runs straight and we are nearer its end that its beginning and there is no turning back. And the same boggy, toilsome stretch which we are walking today awaits Miss Edmonds, the boy from down South, and Mr. Lambie.

The character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theatre and causing a panic. . . . When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight and that no Court could regard them as protected by any constitutional right. — JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JR., *Schenck vs. U. S.*

# The PILGRIM

*"All the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."* —PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

BY O. P. KRETZMANN

## *A Meeting*

(With Apologies to Wormwood, Screwtape, and Mr. C. S. Lewis)

*Editorial Note: The place of this meeting is somewhere in the nether regions. . . . The room is quite large, probably several thousand miles long and just about as wide. . . . As the meeting opens it is crowded with demons who have been called to this special conference. . . . The Time of gathering is somewhat idenfinite. . . . Time does not matter in hell. . . . From some allusions to certain contemporary events we may assume that the time was approximately January, 1951. . . .*

IT WAS a little difficult for Beelzebub to call the meeting to order. . . . There was not only the usual hum of conversation, but here and there above the subdued roar one could hear an occasional scream. . . . Despite these disturbances, however, he looked over the assembled crowd with a smile of satisfaction. . . . Not in many years had he been able to gather such a large and representative group. . . . All his best workers, he noted, were present. . . . It was obvious, he reflected for a moment, that he would have to hurry through the agenda of the meeting. . . . To have so many devils absent from their posts on earth for any considerable length of time could easily prove disastrous to his plans for the immediate future. . . . In Moscow and Rome, at Lake Success and in Korea, the continued progress of his plans depended on hard work without any interruptions. . . . He would have to speed his servants on their way just as soon as possible. . . . Meanwhile, however, the meeting would be profitable both as a survey of work well under way and an examination of methods and techniques which had been adopted by his workers for several hundred years. . . .

Again he rapped for order. . . .

"As is customary at meetings of this kind," he began, "I shall do all the talking. I request that you take notes on any points which may be new to you. Perhaps the first thing I should do is to present a brief report on our activities in the immediate past. I am very happy to tell you that the techniques which we have adopted recently have been astonishingly successful. You will recall that at our last meeting I told all of you to begin to use indirect methods and oblique techniques for the accomplishment of our purposes in the world. This approach diverts attention from us and directs the eyes of men and women toward enemies which are not really enemies at all.

"Perhaps the best example of success in our chosen method was the recent holiday season, especially in the Nation where we are working so hard. You will recall that you were directed to emphasize the giving and getting of the season as a part of our program to divert attention from the real meaning of the holiday. Some of you even hired yourselves out as impersonators of Santa Claus. You will recall that originally Santa Claus had nothing to do with Christmas, but was a kindly old soul who appeared to children during the first week in December. This program has worked especially well with the children. We have planted figures of Santa Claus in every department store in the nation, and their question to the children is always: 'What would you like to have for Christmas?' You see how well this works. It diverts the mind of the rising generation from the person of our New Born Enemy and concentrates it on the business of getting something for Christmas. Now and then we have had a Santa Claus who has asked the child what he would like to give someone for Christmas. This sort of thing must be rooted out just as quickly as possible. If it continues it might well mean the ruin of all our plans for the holiday season of 1951.

"You will recall that many years ago I was called the father of lies. I have always been proud of that title, and our recent work in the world indicates that we have deserved it well. Particularly in the relationship among nations the big lie has now become an accepted technique. In fact, the bigger the lie is the more we seem to be able to accomplish our purposes with it. Those of you who have been in charge of this part of our work are to be congratulated. I would suggest that you continue along the lines which you have adopted at Lake Success and elsewhere.

"Are Wormwood and Nightshade here? Oh, yes, there you are.

I feel that you should be congratulated particularly on your efforts within the Body of our Enemy. I am, of course, referring to what is known as the Christian Church. The rest of you will recall that Wormwood and Nightshade were assigned particularly to the task of diverting the attention of Christians from their real work in the world. They have done remarkably well. I believe that under their direction we have succeeded in producing more mediocre Christians than any other generation in our history. Mediocre Christians, of course, you realize are far more effective allies of ours than any one else. By reducing the religion of the Enemy to dead and dull routine they have managed to thrust more souls into our waiting arms than any other group with whom we have had the privilege of working. I shall expect you, Wormwood and Nightshade, to continue in this work and to expand it whenever possible. Perhaps it would be well for you to pay more attention to the younger generation. If you can persuade them that the religion of the Enemy is merely the observance of certain outward forms and a momentary obeisance before an altar once every seven days, you have done much for the kingdom of darkness. I have also liked your technique of pitting Capitalism against Communism. This throws a red herring across our trail and has helped us a great deal in diverting attention from the real issue which has always confronted the successive generations of the children of men.

"It may be advisable for us to assign several thousand more legions to the task of reducing Christians to mediocrity. As of today I should like to order our legions numbered from 1584 to 2362 to this particular part of our work. It will be your task, under the direction of Wormwood and Nightshade, to spend most of your time in churches, make every effort to get into all the organizations of the church, and to make suggestions for various money-making schemes. If in addition you can create some strife among the officers of an organization within the Body of the Enemy, by all means do so. We have found this to be one of the most effective weapons in our hands. Make every effort, too, to get at the preachers. I realize that they are somewhat difficult to work on, but you need not bring them openly over to our side. If you can just make them tired and fearful and weary, we have already gained very much. Whisper to them just as often as you possibly can that their work is futile and that there is no future for the Kingdom of the Enemy. Point out that the world is bent toward destruction

and that there is no hope on the horizon. This will immediately have an effect on their sermons and the people will listen even less than they do now.

"By the way, I should call your attention to the fact that during the coming weeks you will be entering upon a particularly difficult and trying period. The Enemy has a season which is called Lent. Some of His children really observe it properly, and when they do, our cause is lost. It will therefore be necessary for you to create just as much confusion and diversion as possible during that season. We have been remarkably successful with Christmas, but Lent still remains a problem. Easter, you will recall, we handled very well several years ago when we decided to emphasize dress and finery at that particular season. In addition, of course, we were tremendously helped by some preachers who decided to talk vaguely about the coming of Spring and the budding of the flowers and the immortality of the soul. This was really one of the finest things that ever happened to us. It diverted attention from the fact that Easter is the day of our ultimate defeat because it marks the Resurrection of our Enemy from the dead. By turning the festival into a fashion parade and the celebration of the coming of Spring we really succeeded in removing from that particular day some of the bitterness with which it will always be associated in our minds. As long as people forget about it we can hope for some victories also in this particular area of our work.

"I shall probably find it necessary to call another meeting within a few months. The leadership of the Enemy's forces seems to be becoming somewhat more intelligent and more devoted to the true purposes of the Enemy in the world. There have been certain developments during the past year or two which will require our careful attention. I shall therefore probably call you back into executive session within a very short time.

"Meanwhile, let us not forget our continuing purpose in the world. Especially at this hour, in what men like to call history, our greatest weapon still seems to be fear. Whisper of fear in the hearts of men whenever you have an opportunity. Talk about fear. Have it printed in the newspapers and shouted over the radio. Let the hearts of men tremble and be afraid. When that happens they very easily turn aside from faith and trust in the Enemy and His plans for their souls and His world, and begin to turn in our direction. In addition, fear usually begets hate, and hate of course is our stock in trade.

"Above all, work hard and con-

tinuously. There must be no sleep and no rest for any of us. The end seems to be coming closer and it may be here before we had expected it. It is our task to have just as many souls as possible in our possession when it comes. To this task I assign you once more and wish you well.

"I, Beelzebub, declare the meeting adjourned sine die et sine luce."

Mark how the devil works, for he attacks nothing but faith. Pagans, the unbelieving, the non-Christians he does not tempt. They cling to him like scales to a fish. But when he sees those who have the Word of God, faith, and the Holy Ghost, he cannot get at them. He well knows that he can never win the victory over them, though they may stumble. He well perceives that even if one falls into gross sin, he is not lost thereby, for he can always rise again. Therefore he realizes that he must try a different method and take away their greatest good. If he can prevail upon the soul and make her doubt whether it is the Word of God, the game is won. . . . Once faith is torn away, no man can of himself resist the devil. He inevitably falls into all kinds of vice. – MARTIN LUTHER, *Exposition of Genesis III*

# Five Years of United Nations

*By* JAMES A. RIEDEL
*Purdue University*

THE aftermath of the two great wars of the twentieth century in which the United States has participated have had at least one thing in common: widespread public disillusionment. The extent of that disillusionment has run from disappointment with the apparent failure to achieve the major purposes of the "crusades"—to "save the world for democracy," and "against Fascism"—to distrust of the wartime leaders in all of their official acts during the war and in the making of the peace. The dream of collective-security-and-peace faded once when Woodrow Wilson's League of Nations failed to make the grade in the U. S. Senate, and although the United States plunged whole-heartedly into the United Nations, already its would-be coroners are preparing its obituary.

The birth of a United Nations organization, coming as it did amid the flush of victories on both sides of the world which were made possible by unprecedented cooperation, is generally conceded. It must, then, have been a going concern for some time, and if it is now dead or dying there must be some fading "pulse" that we can feel to ascertain the facts of its passing. Where should we look for that pulse? It seems preeminently reasonable that in looking at the definition of the organism, to the intentions expressed by its creators, we shall find our answer. What was the United Nations designed to accomplish? If it is making headway toward achieving its own goals we must pronounce it alive and growing. If it has failed to achieve its purposes, hastened the disintegration of world order, or failed to contribute substantially to the attaining of its avowed ends, it is either dead or dying.

The United Nations is not a novel experiment. It was built directly on the foundations of the League of Nations and a century of experience with specialized international agencies. Some will say that it was the culmination of a

trend, or at least a logical part of one. One of the earlier stages in the development of collective internationalism grew out of the Napoleonic wars. Following the creation of the "Holy Alliance" in 1815 member nations met in a series of "Congresses" to further their mutual benefit. The collapse of that alliance was due in large part to the fact that it was dedicated to the preservation of the *status quo* in a century of revolutionary movements, and its many interventions became more the object of rising antagonism than of world acclaim. Among the first of the many 19th century international arrangements still extant is the European Commission of the Danube, formed in 1856 to administer and improve navigation along that river. After World War I international commissions were established for the Congo, the Rhine, the Elbe, the Turkish Straits, and others. The anarchy which prevailed in telegraphic communications brought twenty nations together in the International Telegraphic Union in 1856. With the advent of radio the same problem was aggravated, and in 1909 twenty-nine nations transformed the old I.T.U. into the International Radio-Telegraphic Union. Further accounting for this trend, each new sea and air disaster, such as the sinking of the Titanic with its shocking losses, decreased the reluctance of states to surrender, or modify a bit of their precious "sovereignty." The most recent descendant of that trend, the International Telecommunications Union, is affiliated with the United Nations and is attended from both sides of the "iron curtain" with relatively little political wrangling. The necessity of uniform codes, emergency signals, and distribution of radio channels is all too apparent. Similarly, the Universal Postal Union, 1874-, solved increasingly embarrassing problems resulting from conflicting regulations, lack of uniform charges, routes, weights, registry, and so forth. And there were many more.

Americans like to think the United Nations was their own idea, hence that their hopes and aspirations were necessarily the proper standards by which its work shall be judged. To a degree it was an American achievement. President Roosevelt's foresight and aggressiveness measurably contributed to its becoming a reality—rather than the lost hope that the League episode symbolized when the reaction set in following the first world war. Before World War II had ended all the plans were laid, and the Charter signed. At Dumbarton Oaks it was the United States that had made the

bulk of the preparations, the British somewhat less, and the Russians very little. For the most part the American propositions were accepted, but the touchy question of voting was passed on to higher level discussions among the chiefs of state. However, the United Nations is, and always was a world movement in which all, except perhaps the now-cynical Russians, placed some hope for a permanent solution to periodic wars.

What was the environment in which the United Nations was erected? If it is said that the purpose of organization is to instill order through discipline, then it must be observed that the basis of all disciplinary action is force. There are those who say with Lasswell that all politics are a contest between power interests. We may wish to reject that definition of politics on the grounds that it too narrowly excludes the strength of moral and ideological forces (or too broadly defines power), but we cannot escape recognition that the world does not live by any single moral, cultural or ethical standard either. International law represents at best the extent of modern man's journey toward an international moral standard, but now as always its ultimate sanction is brute force, which has generally meant the successful rationalization of the will of the stronger. Its very definition has been largely determined by the national courts of the major powers. Sovereign states are still held to be suitable judges in their own causes, except in the rare instances of compulsory arbitration treaties, and there only to the extent that they have been honored. The United Nations Charter is a solemn, but nevertheless paper, pledge of sovereign states to exercise self-restraint and/or combine for mutual benefit in a world still dominated by military strength.

What were the reasons given for creating the United Nations? First and foremost, to preserve peace by preventing wars. Second, to provide an established channel of communications between all the nations of the world for the public airing of international grievances. Here, much as in our domestic political scene, great faith is placed in the power of public opinion. Third, to institutionalize and coordinate an ever growing number of specialized international agencies, there being now well over a dozen. That the United Nations is a booming success in the second and third objectives is amply demonstrated by the vast number of projects and programs now in productive operation. In these special areas na-

tions have even shown a hopeful, constructive inclination to abridge their sovereignty, or to exercise extraordinary restraint in the support of mutually advantageous projects or regulations. This success may be partially accounted for in the observations that national honor is not so prominent in their discussions, that there is clearly a reciprocal advantage in conforming, and that they are dealing with the slightly more flexible pressures of domestic interest groups which can, to a limited extent, be played off against one another by governments for the achievement of broader objectives. The success of the primary objective, however, is not so readily conceded. We are faced at this moment with a crisis in the Orient that threatens to bring on a third world war, and we have witnessed armed engagements in Palestine, India, Greece, Indonesia, Indo-China and Korea which were not prevented by the existence of a United Nations organization, although they were admittedly restrained by it. But we cannot explain this seeming failure by alone examining our current anxieties and the unfulfilled dream of a lasting peace. We must first look at the intentions of the framers of the Charter as found in the wartime conference record, and then at the document itself—signed in San Francisco and now ratified by some sixty nations.

The Dumbarton Oaks talks in the fall of 1944 were sponsored by the United States and Great Britain, and included the U.S.S.R. and China. The talks were conducted in near secrecy by high level diplomatic representatives rather than by "experts" with previous international organization experience or a theoretical grasp of the problems at issue. The whole affair had an air of negotiation for national advantage, which indeed turned out to be the case. The Dumbarton proposals were met with mixed emotions. They were called reactionary by many League of Nations advocates because of the restoration of the principle of strong national sovereignty. In an effort to escape the alleged legalism of the Covenant, there were scarcely any references to "international law and justice"—and this excited the idealists. On the other hand it marked a forward step in its more effective organization for enforcement, its change of focus from minority group rights to individual rights, its greater concern for social and economic matters, and above all, in the fact that the United States and Soviet Russia were participating. One major unsolved problem after Dumbarton

Oaks, and the tip-off as to what we should have been able to expect from the United Nations, was the number of votes in the Assembly and the voting procedure of the Security Council. The American proposals had called for one vote for each nation, but had allowed one for each member of the British Commonwealth including India which had not yet achieved full independence. The Soviets asked for sixteen votes—one for each Republic in the U.S.S.R., and argued their case in part on the number of votes clearly dependent on the nod of foreign offices in London and Washington.

At Yalta, Roosevelt reasoned with the Russians that such a demand might well bring about the defeat of the Charter in the U. S. Senate. Stalin countered with the plea that indigenous nationalist movements, particularly in the Ukraine and Byelorussia, constituted an immediate threat to the security of the war effort. He was asking for a sop to their strong national pride, and for the sake of the big westward push then under way. The compromise of three votes was certainly not damaging to the United Nations nor to United States interests, and may yet prove to be a fortuitous stroke on our part. Instead of being quieted Ukrainian nationalism is now more fierce than ever. The Soviet Press currently refers to "open warfare" in the Ukraine, and boasted in late October, 1950, the capture of a key general!

What is the significance of the voting procedure in the Security Council? The League Covenant required unanimity of all members before action could be taken. In other words, every state, from Luxembourg to Great Britain, had a veto and could prevent League action. Collective security idealists had a simple solution for the new world organization—NO VETOS, just simple and two-thirds majorities. Thus no state or small bloc could throttle timely, preventive collective action. In the United Nations Charter such an ideal was achieved in the General Assembly, but threats to the peace of the world fall in the exclusive province of the Security Council. In that body we shall find the key to the real objectives of the United Nations as the keeper of the peace. First, we note that five powers have permanent seats in a council of eleven. Even procedural votes, over which there is no "veto," must fail without the support of one or more of the permanent, great powers. These motions require a favorable vote of any seven. But for motions affecting the peace of the world,

or the admission of new member states — "substantive questions" — an extraordinary majority is required. This the Charter defines as a vote of seven, including *all five* of the permanent powers.

The principle of unity among the big powers before collective action could be taken was never seriously questioned by the governments of the "Big Five." Indeed, it was the keystone of Soviet foreign policy in 1944, the object of Churchill's praise, and a practical reality recognized by most of the world as necessary if not always desirable. The same American newspapers that have more recently been condemning President Roosevelt and Yalta for the creation of the "veto monster" were clamoring for it in 1945 as an indispensable protection for American sovereignty when the question was raised at San Francisco. We said then that we could not put ourselves in the position of pre-committing ourselves to any United Nations' decision. It was unthinkable that the rest of the world might tell us what we ought to do. It is also doubtful that a Charter without the veto as it is could have passed the United States Senate.

Did the results of this voting procedure, the veto on collective action by one of the great powers, come to the world and this nation as a great surprise? Are we entitled to express disillusionment and great disappointment? In a debate just after the Yalta Conference, but prior to publication of the full report, Sir Arthur Salter, member for Oxford University and closely associated with the League of Nations, told Parliament almost precisely what the future held in store. After reviewing the voting procedure as it was finally approved, he said:

"If there should be a quarrel, going to the point of war, between any of the three principal Powers in this present system, is it not clear that whether war came or not it would not be prevented by the new organization which is now being set up?"

And then to a question asked by Miss Rathbone (Combined English Universities):

"Would he not agree that the danger of a Great Power being able to veto in this war is not only that it would protect the Great Power itself, as if it were an aggressor, but that any satellite or ally of the Great Power would be protected by that veto, so that the small Powers would be forced to accept a position of vassalage, to obtain protection?"

Salter replied:

"I agree that, unless we took steps to overcome it, that would be a real danger. But in the years ahead, if there is a quarrel of that kind between such Powers, it is not this

new system which will prevent war from coming. I regret that, but I do not regard it as a reason for complete despair and disillusion. We ought, if this should be the position, to recall the whole history of the last 25 years, and to see whether there is not a good deal in that history which will explain the position that I think is being taken." (Hansard, 1 Mar. 1945)

Close analysis of the Charter and its history will only confirm what logic alone could tell us: that to date there is no force in the world to prevent the two super powers—the United States and Soviet Russia—from pursuing any foreign policy they choose, except an open conflict with the other. Nor is there any power to keep any other state from freely following its own sovereign prerogatives if it has the direct, or even tacit backing of one of the super powers. The United Nations Charter merely confirms the facts of life as they emerged from World War II. Moreover, perhaps the veto has operated to save us sometimes from our own, and Russian "brash diplomacy." We have at least that signal to tell us how far a major power can be pushed by the pressure of world opinion. It is only the fortunate lapse in an otherwise diabolically brilliant Soviet foreign policy that made possible United Nations' backing of our action in Korea—the step having been taken during Russia's voluntary absence.

Do the other nations of the world recognize the realities of big-power domination amid the colorful trappings of international organization? We must assume they knew what they were signing in 1945. But more significantly, on October 21, 1950 the General Assembly voted 59 to 0 in favor of a resolution urging the five permanent members of the Council, the big powers, to get together *outside* the United Nations to settle their differences by the time-honored methods of negotiation and diplomacy.

It would, therefore, appear that the United Nations has succeeded somewhat beyond any reasonable expectations of it. It has succeeded in keeping emotionally volatile, pathologically nationalistic governments in communications with one another. From its Tower of Babel world opinion has been slowly crystallizing, and the seeds of an even more hopeful world order may yet come from these melodramatic demonstrations of still unbridled national sovereignty, supported by frightening weapons of mass destruction.

# The Eye in the Catacombs

*By* MARTY MARTY

III

*The Function of the Symbol in the Catacombs*

THE *question of knowing whether our modern sanctities, plunged in the modern world, in this* VASTATIO, *in this abyss of incredulity, of disbelief, and unfaithfulness of the modern world, isolated like beacons, vainly assailed during well-nigh three centuries of raging, furious sea, are not and will not be the most pleasing in the eyes of God is an everlasting question . . . Assailed on all sides, tried on all sides, and by no means shaken, our modern beliefs, chronologically modern, isolated in this modern world, knocked about by a whole world, untiringly assailed, indefatigably beaten, inexhaustibly beaten by waves and tempests, these beliefs end by making, by constituting, by erecting a splendid monument to the presence of God. Forever standing, alone in a whole world, standing in a whole sea, stormy, alone in the entire sea, intact, whole, never in any way shaken, never in any way breached, never in any way broached, our modern loyalties, faiths, and beliefs end by making, constituting and erecting a splendid monument to the presence of God. A la gloire de Dieu."*

Thus in broad, repetitious strokes Charles Pegúy gives a hope for our faith in this day when Christianity must be conscious of itself as a minority influence, as one voice among many, yet bearing in it the seeds of the world's last great Hope. To send out feelers, to put forth its front, to "erect the monument to the presence of God," it seeks a symbol for communication, and it is our contention that this can be found in the *visual* symbol, which includes all the plastic and visible arts, all that communicate originally to the eye. What the eye

in the catacombs saw can be seen by the eye in a new Dark Age because of the nature of the ages; both as to what they seek and to what they can find are they strikingly similar.

Our concern with the function of the symbol in the Catacombs will not necessarily lead us to an appraisal of Catacomb Art. That is not essential here. Rather than dissect it archeologically and historically, we shall seek the reason for the existence of visual media in the early Church, and the ends to which they worked.

i

As the manger was the humble home for Christ, so were the Catacombs a humble cradle for the great tradition of Christian art that showed forth His praise in later centuries. In the hundreds of miles of underground (we must remember that catacombs were for burial, and not for assembly) there thrived the germs of that Christian fellowship, and on the walls were appeals to the eyes of that community of struggling saints. That Christian Art was born in a cemetery is a thought that should appeal to those of Dylan Thomas' outlook as likely poetic subject matter! But that is how it came to be, and we begin with that. Beyond that, archeologists, artists, and historians agree only slightly. Paul Styger and Josef Wilpert in grand studies, Hans Lietzmann, Bernard Berensen, all are disagreed on almost everything else about Catacomb Art beyond this, its genesis. The latest work by Walter Lowrie is charged with misconceptions. Hesitant to enter the controversy as to the national and other external influences on it, or to pass value judgments on Catacomb Art, we can more constructively recreate the "attitude" of its era to find what elements concur with our needs and aims; and thus we can speak in the present tense, making the "catacomb attitude" contemporary.

ii

The chief function of the "responsible" symbol (in contrast to the purely "decorative") was to *witness to the faith.* As the Gospel-compilers were concerned with witnessing and propagating "all that they had seen and heard," so the symbol-makers proceeded. Like the earlier verbal witnesses, these served a practical need in the life of the Church, and had—or have!—no other real excuse for existence.

The visual symbol is especially equipped for this. It relates historic faith to living eyes (Brunner: *Tradition and Renewal),* something so necessary then and

now. It is significant that a large percentage of the earliest pictures in the Church were of Old Testament events. For the picture records history, but is also able in a moment, in one instant, to recreate it for a new day. It suggests history, but is not necessarily history. A creed, too, tells what the apostles and fathers believed, but it also says, "*I* believe."

As a background for the conception of a subject or an incident, the picture *communicates to someone.* (Suzanne Langer points out that human symbols represent, while animal communication only indicates.) In the "attitude of the catacombs" something can be expressed to the community, to initiates to that community, and to the world beyond. The *community of Christians* uses the visual symbol in worship, primarily, for "what is seen" is able to unify the worshippers. It identifies those who have adopted the creed portrayed. While ministering to the senses, it fortifies the soul, and when it becomes, in its highest moments, *art,* it can encourage worship, lending tone, dignity, nobility, consecrating the faithful for the various acts of worship. (Liturgical art.)

The initiates or *converts use the image in more amplified context.* To them it plays the part of "midwife" in their reception of knowledge. As the abstractions in doctrine are being born in their minds, visualizations ease the birth, helping fix the ideas. The instructive value of the curiosity-evoking picture cannot be overestimated. That in the "attitude" of the catacombs the picture appealed primarily to the illiterate, and that Luther directed holy pictures to the poor, should not intimidate us in our use of them in a sophisticated age; for *religious* literacy is certainly low. "*Understandest* thou what thou readest?" is important to him who can actually read. (Visual education.)

Though it be a minority influence, a bold voice from a tiny flock, the Faith is never content only to speak to the faithful. It approaches and encroaches on those on the outside, *the world beyond,* forcing decisions. To the non-Christian the symbol is also a witness to the Word, but now it comes in translation, and is meaningful to him in his own terms, and not necessarily in those of the Christian community. To him it illustrates the elements of keerygama.

The implications of the Creed are formalized into a minimum of terms. Looking at a "responsible" image of a Cross may compel decision as much as a verbal image does. Of course, there are vast limitations. Suzanne Langer calls

visual symbols "non-discursive" as contrasted to the "verbal" symbols, which elucidate, explain, bring about progression. The elements in the visual symbol are simultaneous in appeal; one act of vision exhausts their discursive possibilities. That is why no one dares contend that the eye in the catacomb replaces the mouth, that visual witness is as effectively complete as the verbal (or that Christian art could replace the preached word in the Gospels), but that its value for Gospel-support in the Twentieth Century is inestimable, is undeniable.

## IV
## *The Appeal of the Symbol in Our Day*

### i

A distinguished Doctor of Theology in our Church recently complained to me that "we are spoiling our people through over-use of visual aids," contending that movies, television, and the picture magazine have killed the art of abstract thinking. His observation is undoubtedly true, and the death of abstract mental conceptions constitutes a serious blow to doctrinal theology, and thus, in its highest sense, to Christian living and expression. There is a certain amount of conceptualization that must take place when we speak of two realms, of a *deus absconditus,* in evolving a Christian cosmology, and in speaking of the Atonement.

But the Christian had little part in this transition in modes of thought to our visual age, for all this has occurred in centuries after Christian art had died; we may be excused on that score. Nor dare we regret the transition—rather than regret it, we must hurry to appropriate all the visual methods and techniques into our language of communication, to speak to an age that "thinks through its eyes." It may be that this is only a transition period, and that the next development in the history of communication may see a return in some measure to immediately abstract conceptualizations; but until then we must use the terms understood today; we must change with the times. This study is appropriate only to this period in Christian history: it is by no means our hope that Christianity remain in the newly-dug "catacombs," speaking from a cemetery as it were, to an oblivious age—we only begin with things as they are.

It is almost unbelievable that the Church has not more wholeheartedly seized upon the symbol in this age, an age which caters to the eye. People *see* the movie rather than read the book. They *watch* television rather than listen to the comedian. The *picture* magazine has almost dealt a death

blow to black print. The poster has rendered obsolete the letter of appeal, and the spectacle thrives. Totalitarian powers, where the artist ranks high, have recognized this, both in speaking to the home nation and in propagandizing the world beyond. Have we accepted responsibility to such a world?

"In faith we have the freedom to be publicly responsible in the language of the Church for our trust and our knowledge. But it must be made clear that the Church exists for the sake of the world, that the light is shining in the darkness—confession must be fundamentally translatable into the speech of Mr. Everyman. . . . If our faith is real, it must encroach upon our life . . . there must be translation, for example, into the language of the newspaper."—Barth.

ii

There are those who contend that "art has no appeal today," that the symbol is and must be dead, that people today are not sufficiently aesthetic-minded to *look*. I believe they underestimate the situation. Though we still say: "act in a *play*" and "*play*" a musical instrument, the arts are not thought of as "playing." They are still instinctively taken seriously and with some awe, even where they are somewhat neglected. Secondly, these critics do not realize that art may stand in a double relationship to history. Though with much awe regarded, art does not seem to them to influence our times. We must remember that all creative art sets a pace ahead of its contemporaries while it, at the same time, reflects and speaks to creative minorities in its own day. A glance at history makes this seem almost axiomatic: Michelangelo, Giotto and Rembrandt, all were only partly understood in their times. Yet they had influence even before the subsequent centuries understood and appreciated their work more thoroughly.

In our day, people who never read Proust or Joyce or Eliot live, in some way or other, in a world influenced by them. The *avant garde* and the men of genius influence the lesser lights, who, in turn, bring the genius-world, or at least facets of it, into contact with the man on the streets.

Through commercial art we are influenced by the work of even such extremist modern artists as Mondrian and Moholy-Nagy, though we may never have seen their names or work. To add one more example, we are told that even *bebop* and the modern jazz artists benefit from the innovations of Ravel, Hindemith, Bartok and Delius. The "popular" world and the commercial field are aware of the usable elements, even in complex modern art. Others complain that this complexity destroys its possibilities of use to us. The

complaint is made that we do not "understand what modern art means." Yet the question proves that such art has evoked curiosity of thought or action, which the visual symbol, like the Christianity that sponsors it, must evoke.

"Remove from the Christian religion, as Christendom has done, its ability to shock, and Christianity, by becoming a direct communication, is altogether destroyed. It then becomes a tiny superficial thing, capable neither of inflicting deep wounds nor of healing them; by discovering an unreal and merely human compassion, it forgets the qualitative distinction between man and God"—Kierkegaard.

On the other hand, many sincere people at the opposite extreme see the visual symbol as being *too popular in appeal.* They fear that the reality will be forgotten for the image, that the symbol itself will be reverenced. They bring us squarely to the heart of the age-old iconoclastic controversy. Here may we hasten to apply the assurance that at this particular moment in world history, *idolatry* of this nature is the least of our worries in the Protestant world or the Reformation tradition. Idolatry takes far subtler, more glamorous forms today. Image-worship would destroy the whole cozy game of what catechisms call *fine* idolatry (as contrasted to *gross* image-worship). What is more, the association of image or ikon-worship with the Roman Catholic tradition arouses the instinctive prejudices and mistrust of the Protestant mind. Yet this is perhaps the foremost obstacle to releasing the visual symbol for use today. So it must be faced squarely.

"C. G. Jung has called the history of Protestantism a history of continuous 'iconoclasm' ('the destruction of pictures,' that is, of religious symbols) and, consequently, the separation of our consciousness from the universally human 'archetypes' that are present in the subconscious of everybody. He is right. Protestants often confuse essential symbols with accidental signs. They often are unaware of the numinous power inherent in genuine symbols, words, acts, persons, things. They have replaced the great wealth of symbols appearing in the Christian tradition by rational concepts, moral laws, and subjective emotions. This also was a consequence of the Protestant protest against the superstitious use of the traditional symbols in Roman Catholicism and in all paganism. But here also the protest has endangered its own basis."—Tillich in "The Protestant Era."

There must be some warrant for this feeling. It takes its origin in an honest recognition of the demonic character in this expression, something less easily noticed in other media. Yet we are all acquainted with *Bibliolotry* as

contrasted to either Biblicism or Bible-orientated faith, and the preached Word carries the same serpent in its bosom. Is it irreverent to assume that much of the awe for the *proclamation* does not carry with it awe for the *proclaimer,* that there is such a thing as *Preacherolatry*—that many a spinstered mind in the pews may be reverencing the preacher (especially if he is particularly handsome and particularly deep-voiced) rather than the preachment? It is hard to deny the danger in all expressions when the lowly human (Cocteau: "I am an ass and I carry the Lord") carries the Divine Word in any way.

If there should arise a special danger again in what Toynbee calls "transference from verbal to visual conveyance," the issue could be met squarely without loss, for when the image is mistaken for the reality, the essential character of the symbol is forgotten and it becomes worthless. Once more, there is no reasonable fear of all this at present.

I believe the demon that now exists in the visual aspect of Christian communication today came through the *codification* of art into outworn and tired expression (often vulgarly sentimental, "pretty," and trite) current in the Church, and much upheld by many. Codification of any symbol destroys its primary functions to all. In short, we must re-think the art now current, develop a philosophy of visual education to compare with recent technological developments in that field, and resurrect a *creative symbol.*

iv

Our remarks raise one large problem: how are we to deal with the assertion, made in an earlier chapter, that the visual symbol could provide a common ground on which all Christian expression and communcation could congregate?

There is the historical testimony; the symbol witnessed well during the Early Centuries when the Church was on the defensive and during the Middle Centuries, when it was a majority voice. It fell into oblivion through the Protestant distrust of images. *That distrust is no longer founded on fact, but on fear.* The only obstacle, then, is imaginary and negligible. Can not the resurrected symbol bring new life to the creative voice of the Church, as its forebears did in earlier centuries? Often a housecleaning reveals many thrilling discoveries and forgotten possibilities.

Another reason for this is that man thinks in visual terms today, and in appealing first of all to his eye we can secondly approach the whole man through verbal communications like preachment, lit-

erature, and finally, audially, through music, etc. The symbol will be content to serve as "midwife" in this Gospel-support. Finally, the universality of symbolization in other ages and races indicates its fundamental appeal in all expression and communication. May we not discover one day the Fundamental Symbol to be man's aspiration for a better life? And the answer to that aspiration, of course, is to be found in the Cross, *our* symbol.

From where, then, is the new visual symbol to come in the new catacombs? From the creative efforts of the Christian community:

"The community of Christ alone is building the church. God sends His workmen. If only there is a community that lives in prayer and in the Holy Sacraments, there will be an end to all need and distress." —Rudolf Koch.

From the creative efforts of existing artists and of those yet undiscovered, unnoticed and undeveloped, who will concentrate their efforts in the service of the Word.

"A painter should never put on canvass what he has not first spiritually created and thought out in every detail. The artist thus has the inward vision, he sees and hears with his soul. The Lord Creator has blessed him as one who first conceives the beautiful as his very own, spiritually creating it before giving it to the world at large."—Domenichino.

What if it is "hired art"—in a sense, so was Michelangelo's and Giotto's. When the "hired" one is a genius he creates masterpieces, or when there is sufficient encouragement, out of the profusion of symbols may there not one day again grow a great tradition of art for the service of our heavenly King? Out of the plainly functional, may there not grow the noble, the sublime? The arts can, in the words of Arthur Symonds, "make a potent and effective appeal in the advance of the race in its relation to redemption."

The eye in the Catacombs was directed to the life beyond, the Resurrection. The visual symbol today will nourish the same hope, but it dares not neglect those whose toils are not yet ended, who are urgently busy, but still have time *to look*.

# Christ the Revolutionary

*By* ERNEST B. KOENKER, PH.D.

IT IS commonly held that a Christian cannot be a revolutionary. We usually associate the word "revolution" with violence and subversion of the existing social order—none of which is becoming to the Christian who is "subject to the higher powers." In fact, Webster defines a revolution as, "A fundamental change in political organization, or in a government or constitution; the overthrow or renunciation of one government or ruler, and the substitution of another, by the governed." When the term is mentioned we immediately think of barricades and street-fighting, of plotting and counter-plotting.

There may, however, be serious question regarding the appropriateness of these images. Another definition of the term is: "A total or radical change in affairs or in some particular thing." The true revolutionary is not the impoverished agitator sitting in some remote den smoking marijuana cigarettes and drinking poor liquor. A revolution that is not first of all in the order of ideas, preferably with a *great* idea at its base, is not worthy of support or sacrifice, not to speak of one's blood.

Christ was a thoroughgoing revolutionary: he lived as one, and he was finally put to death as one. The charge against him was: *"We found this fellow perverting the nation,* and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King." His accusers knew that he was a dangerous revolutionary, and it was because he made them so uncomfortable and uneasy that they determined to rid themselves of him. So they misrepresented his case by declaring him a dangerous *political* revolutionary. But of all things, Christ's revolution was *not political;* he did not forbid payment of taxes to Caesar; he did not lead a national uprising against Roman oppression—

though this refusal, incidentally, lost him broad support; he did not champion the cause of oppressed minorities.

Like most revolutions, that of Christ had its fanatical wing. When force was being applied to capture the Leader of the little band, Peter drew his sword to defend the cause as he saw it. The Judaizers, later, were going the Jews one better by holding to Christ *and* Judaism. Christians at Thessalonica were so spiritual that they refrained from work in expectation of the *Parousia.* Still, when Christ had been put to death it seemed that the whole movement had been brought to an end.

Yet Christ's revolution was the broadest, the most profound and dynamic that the world has known. It was a spiritual rebirth. One cannot say that it was so much the *new ideas* that he introduced—though his teaching on God's Kingdom and His righteousness were revolutionary enough to turn society upside-down. The revolutionary element was rather the man himself, in outward appearance not essentially different from his fellows—so that his hearers could say, "Is not this the carpenter's son?"—but in his God-relatedness. He was the wonderful New Thing in God's creation.

It seems that the Church has studiously tried to make Christ palatable and innocuous to successive generations. Though not accepted by *his own* generation—you recall, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"—modern preachers have been trying to fill churches by a "Gospel" calculated to be pleasing and acceptable, a body of high ideals which no one in his right mind would reject. Søren Kierkegaard, a great Christian revolutionary himself, once said, "The modern clergyman is trained in the art of introducing Christianity in such a way that it signifies nothing." We have made of Christ in our everyday thinking the innocuous, well-meaning, but deceived gentleman of Ernst Renan's *Life of Jesus:* he is the gentle Jesus riding "on His long-eyelashed gentle mule," preaching his sweet theology of love and winning everyone by his personal charm.

Christ the revolutionary, the Son of God, stands as a challenge to man's proud conception of his inherent goodness. Despite the fact that we petition in song, "Come not in terrors as the King of Kings," he *does* come as such to those who have refused to accept him as *Lord* in this life. The end-result of his revolution is that he rules in the hearts and lives of men by displacing the demonic powers that had formerly held

sway there. The early church was more correct than we when it depicted Christ clad in priestly vestments "reigning from the tree." It presented the *"Heilsbedeutung"* of the passion. Here was no gory, annihilated Christ, with sunken head and body relaxed in death, but here was the King of Glory, our King because he died for us.

"Behold, I make all things new." Have you ever thought of what this means? Of one thing we may be certain—that we have not yet begun to fathom the depths of its meaning for ourselves and society. It is characteristic of the thinking of most men that they would compass the world in search of some profound new idea that would change life for them, what Rilke suggests, "das Mächtige, Ungemeine, das Erwachen der Steine, Tiefen, dir zugekehrt," when there is nothing more revolutionary than certain simple ideas, such as "Love your enemies," "Do good unto them that despitefully use you and persecute you," "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on this earth," or "The just shall live by his faith."

The Christian revolution must first remake individuals; it must "turn them about," as the Gospel says. Accounts of the great conversion experiences are eloquent witnesses to this power. What we often do not appreciate is that there are potentialities in the Christian faith to remake society, too. Our great obstacle here is the feeling that there is no more to be done, that there are no new patterns of life to explore. Actually there are opportunities for Christian revolutionaries to renovate the social order. There are possibilities, for example, of introducing technical and agricultural aids to backward native groups that are tremendous: instead of the pattern of exploitation there might be one of service and cooperation. Or there are possibilities for new forms of labor-management cooperation, on the order of the new European communities of work, which would cut across the present approaches to labor-management problems. We are too convinced that the "little people" can no longer do anything, that we are living in a strictly middle-class society, where there are actually no pressing problems such as earlier generations faced.

Father Leo J. Trese speaks about talking with a public utilities official, who told of having been sent, a short time before, to shut off the gas in a two-room shack where the parents lived with their seven children. Because of his recurring fits of epilepsy, no factory would hire the father. When the official arrived the family didn't complain: they hadn't paid their bill for five months.

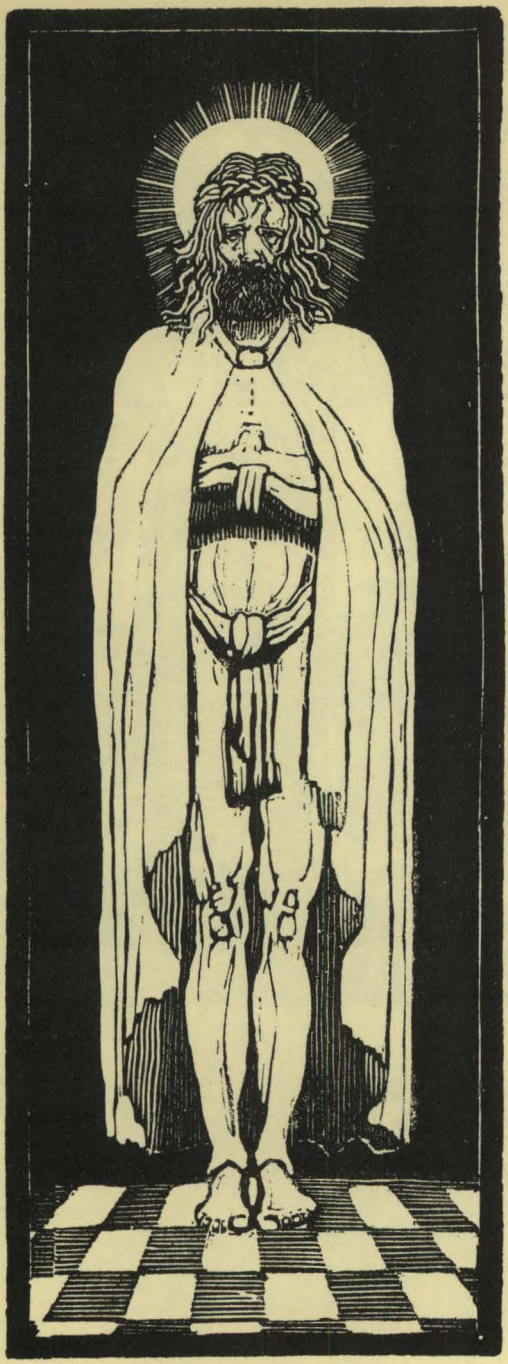
WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"I am the Vine"

WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Through much Suffering"


WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)

Daniel Greiner

"That they all may be one"



WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Ecce Homo"

WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Behold Thy Son"

WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Truly this is the Son of God"

WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Consummatum Est"

WOOD-CUTS ON ST. JOHN (II)
Daniel Greiner
"Be not faithless but believing"

But the mother did plead with the official to wait until the roast would be done, before turning off the gas. Since such a request made him cynical, the gas man looked into the oven to see whether there really *was* a roast. There was; it was the family dog, neatly prepared and roasting, the last hope of a once proud family.

It would be idle speculation to wonder how many dogs are eaten nowadays, but the figures would probably startle us. One does not so much deplore the fact that we have forgotten our Lord's statement, "The poor ye have always with you," as that we don't really care; we are too engrossed in our own satisfactions to be detoured for an act or word of kindness. Again, is there anything so revolutionary as Christ's statement, "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it?" There remains much to be done. T. S. Eliot writes:

Much to cast down, much to build,
much to restore;
Let the work not delay, time and
the arm not waste;
Let the clay be dug from the pit,
let the saw cut the stone,
Let the fire not be quenched in the
forge.

I am asking all the politicians, all the partisans, all the eminent personalities to support my demand for a Select Committee on political nomenclature, charged with the production of a political dictionary before the next General Election, on the common ground that logomachy is the very devil. Even liars need a language that will enable them to lie unambiguously. To the truthful, the present impossibility of wording their messages without being misunderstood is an agony. — GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, in a letter to the editor of the *London Times*, August 19, 1948.

# *Music* AND MUSIC MAKERS

## *Bach Comes to the U.S.A.*

[CONTINUED]

BY WALTER A. HANSEN

"Oft in the stilly night, ere slumber's chains have bound me," my thoughts turn to Bach and Bach's wonderful music. When the kindly little Sandman has deposited his sleep-bringing grains in my eyes, I dream anew of the great master. No doubt my subconscious mind is always energetically at work while I dream, for I try to picture to myself a Bach as Bach actually was when he walked the earth in the flesh—not as a demigod; not as a crotchety, sanctimonious, and hidebound purist; not as a man who, on principle and on system, turned up his nose at fun and decried every new trend in music.

The venerable, redoubtable, and able Sir Thomas Beecham, Bart., has come to town. He has come from London with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Bach and I are all agog. We decide to attend the concert. On our way to the auditorium I give the master what, in military parlance, is called a briefing. I tell him something about the sturdy Englishman who will conduct the orchestra.

"I've read much about Sir Thomas in recent weeks," I say. "The much-discussed Britisher has given clever and not-so-clever phrase-makers a goodly amount of grist for their well-oiled mills. Sir Thomas has been called a wag, a wit, a diatribist of the concert platform, a stormy petrel, a strutting popinjay of the baton, a wizard of the rostrum, a chameleon, a man marvelously mixed in his elements, a dilettante, an English Pagliacci, and many other names. Furthermore, it has been said time and again that Tommy —as the orchestra members call him—owes his prominence in the music world to the fact that he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Some declare without batting an eye that had it not

been for Beecham's Pills and the many pounds sterling which those famous little godsends for indisposed livers earned for the conductor's father, the phrase-inspiring Tommy would never have cut any ice at all as a musician."

"So Sir Thomas' papa was a manufacturer of pills," Bach puts in. "What a fascinating story! And what an absorbing thing for a musician to consider! On more than one occasion during my visit to your shores I've concluded that the invention of liver pills was a godsend in the field of music.

"The liver, you see, sometimes plays a prominent role in the art of composition. If the liver is sluggish or out of sorts in any way at all during the processes of gestation and parturition, its state of, shall I say, 'unhealth' is usually reflected in the music that's produced. Just as a sick cow can't give milk worth drinking, so a composer with an obstreperous liver can't, as a rule, bring forth music to represent him at his best. More than one composition I've heard has moved me to exclaim, 'This is the work of a man with liver trouble!' "

"Hold on, Mr. Bach!" I cry out. "Aren't you treading on dangerous ground? Haven't you overlooked Johannes Brahms? Brahms, you know, wrote a number of great masterpieces while he was afflicted with liver trouble."

"You're getting entirely too serious," retorts Bach, "and maybe I, too, was more serious than I should have been when I talked about composers and their livers. What I meant to say was that some works I've heard have forced me to come to the conclusion that their creators brought them into being at a time when obstreperous livers had unquestionable right of way."

"Well," I continue, "all this talk about the liver as a potent force in the art of composition is beside the point at present. It was brought on by my reference to Beecham's Pills.

"To those who contend that Sir Thomas' prominence as a conductor must be credited to Beecham's Pills and to the money earned by those mighty little spheres I say, 'Stuff and nonsense!' In addition, I exclaim, 'Fiddlesticks!'

"Anyone who has followed Sir Thomas' career and has read his autobiography, *A Mingled Chime,* knows that this gifted, sharp-witted, plucky, and outspoken Englishman has risen to eminence by dint of hard work and unquenchable energy. Tommy has had many struggles and more than one disappointment."

**Sir Thomas as Conductor**

"What do you think of Sir Thomas as a conductor?" asks Bach. "As you know, I've been

fascinated and amazed no end to see how the art of conducting has been developed since my time. Would you rank Sir Thomas as a great master of the baton?"

"Many say without the slightest hesitation," I answer, "that Sir Thomas is a noted conductor. Then, however, comes what they consider the punch question: 'But is he a conductor of outstanding ability?' My own reply is an emphatic yes. If anyone asks, 'Is Sir Thomas a great conductor?' I say yes with equal forcefulness. Why? Because no man could have done for music what the seventy-one-year-old English maestro has accomplished if the elements of greatness were lacking in his make-up."

"We shall see," says Bach as he lets me know with firmness and decisiveness that he permits no man to sway the Bachian mind.

Johann Sebastian thinks for himself. He did so when he was alive. As a result, he was sometimes in hot water. But he preferred being in hot water to being known as a jelly fish or a yes man.

"We shall see," Bach says again as we wend our way to the auditorium. Then he asks, "By the way, what kind of music is Sir Thomas going to present this evening?"

"He'll begin his program," I answer, "with a symphony from the pen of Joseph Haydn. It'll be the *Symphony No. 102, in B Flat Major.* Then he'll conduct Mozart's *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra (K. 417),* with Dennis Brain as soloist. Next the orchestra will play Frederick Delius' *Dance Rhapsody No. 1.* The concert will be concluded with a performance of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony.*"

"I've heard music by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven," says Johann Sebastian, "but who in the world is—or was—Frederick Delius?"

So I tell Bach a little about the eccentric English composer whose name was Delius—the composer whose music might soon have perished from the earth unwept and unsung had it not found for itself a champion as ardent and as able as Sir Thomas.

**The Concert**

We take our seats in the auditorium. The concert begins. Sir Thomas is not as spry as he used to be. He walks rather slowly to the podium. The orchestra is on its toes, and in a moment the concert hall is flooded with the beautiful melodies of Haydn's symphony. Bach and I are all ears. Out of the corner of one eye I note that Johann Sebastian's face is alight with pleasure.

At the conclusion of the performance of Haydn's symphony I

turn to the master and ask, "Did you like the composition?"

"It's beautiful," says Bach. "It bubbles over with fun and good humor—except, of course, in the introduction and in the second movement. And how grippingly those wonderful Haydn melodies sang under Tommy's inspiring leadership! The reading had the refreshing quality of spontaneity."

"You must bear in mind," I say, "that Haydn and Mozart are Tommy's meat. Now let's listen to the *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra.* I've been longing for many a moon to hear young Mr. Brain. He's said to be the ablest horn player in the world."

We listen to Mozart's engrossing concerto—a concerto wrought with fabulous skill and filled with fun and overpowering beauty. Mr. Brain plays with artistry that is flawless and, in my opinion, altogether matchless. Sir Thomas' reading of the work is Mozartian in every respect. Need one say more?

"What delicacy this imperishable music has in its warp and woof!" Bach exclaims. "What delicacy and, at the same time, what strength! I can see that Mozart's orchestral music needs a conductor like Sir Thomas, and now I understand fully what you mean when you say that there are not many great expositors of Mozart among the eminent conductors of your time! Now I, too, am convinced that Sir Thomas is blessed with the qualities of greatness!"

The orchestra plays Delius' *Dance Rhapsody No. 1,* one of the better works from the pen of a completely self-centered composer. Bach takes much pleasure in noting the richness and the many hues of the orchestration. But he, like others, wonders how long the music of Delius will live without a Sir Thomas to espouse its somewhat puny cause. Nevertheless, Bach does not indulge in a categorical prediction. "This business of predicting," he says, "is dangerous."

Sir Thomas' performance of Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* is as gripping as it is lucid. The famous Britisher is not one of those conductors who exalt themselves at the expense of Beethoven and, as a result, give sensationalized readings of the *Pastoral Symphony.* Why should anyone mar the stirring beauty of this masterpiece by resorting to theatrical effects? Beethoven speaks to us most eloquently when, as happened in Sir Thomas' reading, his music is presented in all honesty, sincerity, and truthfulness.

"I must say a word about the tempi employed by Sir Thomas in his expositions of music by Haydn and Mozart," I tell Bach as we leave the auditorium after paying our respects to Sir Thomas and to

Lady Beecham. "Those tempi were wholly in accord with the spirit of the works. They were based on sterling scholarship. In these days of speed and more speed the compositions of Haydn and Mozart are often distorted by a pace altogether too rapid for clarity and authenticity.

"According to standard usage, the word 'melodist' is applied to composers. But why couldn't it be used with equal pertinence when one speaks of a man who, like Sir Thomas, makes listeners realize with unforgettable sharpness that melody is and remains the very soul of music?"

[TO BE CONTINUED]

## RECENT RECORDINGS

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH. *The Well-Tempered Clavier: Preludes and Fugues Nos. 9-16.* Wanda Landowska, harpsichordist.—Masterful playing by one of the greatest musicians of the present time. RCA Victor WDM-1439.

JOHANN STRAUSS THE YOUNGER. *Highlights from Die Fledermaus.* Patrice Munsel, Regina Resnik, Risë Stevens, James Melton, Robert Merrill, Jan Peerce, Hugh Thompson, Paula Lechner, and Johnny Silver with the RCA Victor Orchestra under Fritz Reiner and with the Robert Shaw Chorale.—Spirited performances of excerpts from a most delightful work. Reiner conducts with exemplary skill. RCA Victor WDM-1457.

TOSCANINI CONDUCTS LIGHT MUSIC. *The Sorcerer's Apprentice,* by Paul Dukas; *The Skater's Waltz,* by Emil Waldteufel; *Overture to Colas Breugnon,* by Dimitri Kabalevsky. The NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini.—The renowned octogenarian conducts with verve, precision, and wonderful effectiveness. RCA Victor WDM-1416.

ROBERT SCHUMANN. *Frauenliebe und Leben, Op. 42.* Marian Anderson, contralto, with Franz Rupp at the piano.—Few singers of our time can match Miss Anderson's skill in setting forth the beauties of the German lied. RCA Victor WDM-1458.

ROBERT SCHUMANN. *Kinderszenen, Op. 15.* Vladimir Horowitz, pianist.—Among the finest music ever written for children. But it takes a great artist to play Schumann's *Kinderzenen* properly. Horowitz is equal to the requirements. RCA Victor WDM-1447.

FRÉDÉRIC FRANCOIS CHOPIN. *Mazurkas: Op. 59, No. 3; Op. 41, No. 1; Op. 30, No. 3; Op. 30, No. 4; Op.*

*63, No. 2; Op. 63, No. 3; Op. 50, No. 3.* Vladimir Horowitz, pianist.—Masterful playing, superb recording. RCA Victor WDM-1446.

SERGEI PROKOFIEFF. *Peter and the Wolf: An Orchestral Fairy Tale, Op. 67.* The Boston Symphony Orchestra under Serge Koussevitzky, with Eleanor Roosevelt as narrator.—I myself am exceedingly fond of this graphic music for the little ones. Koussevitzky conducts the orchestra with fine skill, but you can have Mrs. Roosevelt as narrator. What terrible drabness! RCA Victor WDM-1437.

A PROGRAM OF ALL TIME FAVORITES. *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny,* sung by Marian Anderson; Gade's *Jalousie,* played by the Boston "Pops" Orchestra; *La donna e mobile,* from *Rigoletto,* sung by Enrico Caruso; a square-toed forty-finger version of Liszt's syrup-soaked *Liebestraum,* played by the First Piano Quartet; *Make Believe,* from *Show Boat,* sung by Allan Jones; *Italian Street Song,* from *Naughty Marietta,* sung by Jeanette MacDonald; *Bluebird of Happiness,* by Sandor Harmati, sung by Jan Peerce; an abbreviated version of Johann Strauss the Younger's *Blue Danube Waltzes,* played by Leopold Stokowski's symphony orchestra.—It is safe to predict that this album will be a best seller. RCA Victor WDM-1438.

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY. *Concerto in D Major, for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 35.* Jascha Heifetz, violinist, with the Philharmonia Orchestra of London under Walter Susskind.—Heifetz plays this popular concerto with his customary wizardry. RCA Victor WDM-1442.

FRÉDÉRIC FRANCOIS CHOPIN. *Sonata in B Flat Minor, Op. 35.* Vladimir Horowitz, pianist.—A stirring performance of one of the greatest of all piano sonatas. RCA Victor WDM-1472.

SAMUEL BARBER. *Sonata for Piano, Op. 26.* Vladimir Horowitz, pianist.—An engrossing work from an American composer with much to say. RCA Victor WDM-1466.

CHRISTMAS CHORAL MUSIC. *While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night,* set to a traditional Yorkshire tune by Arthur Warrell; *Lay Down Your Staffs,* an old French carol arranged by Franz Wasner; *From Heaven Above,* arranged by Johann Eccard; three chorales from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio; The Shepherd's Carol,* by William Billings; *The Shepherd Had an Angel,* for solo soprano, viola, and eight-part choir, by Maurice Besly; *Kindersegen,* by Franz Wasner; *On Christmas Eve,* a medley of Christmas hymns and carols arranged by Hugo Gehrke. The Lutheran A Cappella Choir of Milwaukee under Hugo Gehrke.—No musician worth his salt would hesitate to recommend this album wholeheartedly. I have great admiration for the skill and the musicianship of Mr. Gehrke. 78 rpm. Issued by E. D. Nunn, 803 East Spooner Road, Milwaukee 11, Wisconsin.

# The New Books

READ NOT TO CONTRADICT AND CONFUTE—NOR BELIEVE AND TAKE FOR GRANTED—BUT TO WEIGH AND CONSIDER

*Unsigned reviews are by the Associates*

## MUSIC

### THE ORATORIOS OF HANDEL

By Percy M. Young. New York. Roy Publishers. 1950. 244 pages. Illustrated. $4.50.

It is good to see that the world of music has, for many years, been paying homage to the mighty genius of Johann Sebastian Bach. It is regrettable, however, to note that Georg Frederic Handel, another mighty genius, has, for a long time, been neglected. Yes, Handel's *Messiah* continues to be presented frequently and in many places; but what about the other oratorios from the great master's puissant pen? With the exception of a few excerpts, they are, for the most part, virtually unknown to most concert-goers of our time. It would be altogether wrong to say that *Messiah* represents the sum total of Handel's awe-inspiring facility, pertinence, and beauty of expression. Other masterpieces written by this German composer who became a citizen of England contain numerous pages that are equal, and sometimes superior, in greatness to the best music in *Messiah*.

Percy M. Young has written a fine book about Handel's oratorios—a book which should be read and digested by everyone interested in becoming acquainted with the achievements of a great master. The author does not worship blindly at the Handelian shrine. Sometimes he finds fault with the famous composer's way of writing. Young's volume, like all critical evaluations, is, in more than one respect, highly subjective. The author has a right to say that *Judas Maccabaeus* "is made for one hearing," but he would no doubt fight strenuously for the right of another to hold to an opinion diametrically different from his. "The Handelian oratorio," says Young, "is, if you like, sacred music: regard it with sanctity, but not sanctimony."

The book contains many musical examples from the oratorios of Handel.

## CRITICISM

### THE AMERICAN WRITER AND THE EUROPEAN TRADITION

Edited by Margaret Denny and William H. Gilman. Minneapolis. University of Minnesota Press. 1950. 192 pages. $2.75.

WHEN twelve men (I wonder why no eligible women were asked?) formulate a series of lectures on a central topic and for the edification of the public, it is natural to expect a little duplication. The perceptive essays in this compact book were originally delivered in four conferences at the University of Rochester 1948-49. The specified theme, which is now the book title, was selected "because of its crucial importance today." To the credit of the editors be it said that this written version gives a homogeneous effect with a minimum of repetition by the literary critics who present this fresh viewpoint in the study of American literature.

Three governing questions bind the essays together: What was the American writer's original heritage of European ideas? What principles, etc., of the American writer were native—or mostly so—to our country? What has been the influence of American letters abroad? The first three essays (by Wright, Hornberger, and Spiller) lead us from the British Renaissance through the Enlightenment to the fusion of colonial-cosmopolitan thought and expression in Franklin. The next four (by Williams, Smith, Howard, and Thorp) present the intellectual outlook and behavior of American writers from Irving to Henry James, namely as children of the romantic European heritage in the process of blending with the native realistic pattern. The remaining five (by Gohdes, Kazin, Trilling, Pearson, and Levin) bring down to our own times the intellectual biography of American writers further conditioned by both inheritance and environment.

This book can be enjoyed in chapters or studied as a whole, well indexed. It is definitely not limited in appeal to the learned specialist, but has something substantial to say to anyone truly interested in American culture. What each one of us should continue to remind ourselves of after reading a volume such as this, is the indisputable fact that the European mind is an inevitable and (note this well)! invigorating portion of our nation's artistic development.

HERBERT H. UMBACH

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### OUR ALLY: the People of Russia

By William A. Wood as told to Myriam Sieve. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1950. 288 pages. $3.00.

SUCH a title, by differentiating between the government of the USSR and the Russian people, seems to suggest that in case of armed conflict, the U.S. might expect the Russian people to turn away from its government and consider the U. S. as its natural ally, or even to give positive help to this country.

To be sure, the above suggestion is not supported by any evidence given on the pages of this book, which is a very vivid, sometime exciting, sometime exhilarating description of the first-hand experiences of an American engineer who spent about twelve years in Russia in the employ of the Soviet government.

Notwithstanding the spiritual and physical limitations which confront the foreigner in the land of Soviets, Mr. Wood in his work as industrial planner and executive had an excellent chance to meet Russians of every class.

The book abounds in delightful descriptions of episodes taken from the every-day life of Russian people, in exquisite portraits of personal acquaintances and in amusing stories testifying to the wholesome humour of the author. However, despite this completely unpolitical approach, despite the predilection of the author for the brighter and lighter sides of human life and despite the preoccupation with his own work as engineer, as the story develops, the ghastly tragedy of a nation becomes ever more evident. Between the lines, this frightful picture emerges:

The present generation of the Russian people is living a nightmare of a life. It is terrorized by fear of the all-powerful political police and hypnotized by the hammering propaganda of the Communist Party. The people feel utterly unhappy about this situation, still they do not even dare to talk about it.

Despite the suggestion in the title, the author, for all his direct contact with the drab present-day Russian life, for all his encounter with signs of the all pervading police terror, for all his awareness of the physical sufferings and spiritual unhappiness of the Russian people, is not in a position to give a single case of open resistance. Permanent terror and periodical liquidations have frightened the people into complete subjection.

Mr. Wood feels a sincere liking for the naive, childish, sometimes primitive Russian people. He sympathetically describes the innate friendliness, openness and goodwill of the Russian peasant. The people of Russia have all qualification to be liked and trusted. Nobody should blame the Russian people for the doing of its government. Mr. Wood is right to call the Russian people the natural ally of this country.

However, if we need any more proof for our belief that a police-state is not only in a position to victimize its people, but also to make out of it a tool to be used for any selfish purpose, Mr. Wood's experience in Russia supplies us with it.

Unsaid in this book, still evident from it is this: as long as the Soviet regime will have at its disposal all the terrible media of a modern police-state to stifle in bud any opposition and as long as the freedom of the spirit remains effaced by the official propaganda and human intellect enchained, there can be little hope that the natural goodness of the Russian people will do our cause any good. As long as the Soviet leadership remains highly efficient in the

ancient craft of all despots to hold on to power, little hope remains to make the Russian people actually "our ally."

In peace our sole hope lies in taking the truth—should that be possible at all—to the people of Russia.

In the case of actual armed conflict, everything depends on what course the warfare will take. A successful campaign is bound to strengthen the Soviet at home. A defeat would end its authority before its people and probably finish the monster for ever.

ZOLTAN SZTANKAY

## THE VATICAN AND THE KREMLIN

By Camille M. Cianfarra. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1950. 258 pages. $3.00.

THE *New York Times* correspondent at the Vatican, Camille M. Cianfarra, reviews the struggle between the Roman Catholic Church and Communism. He discusses the relations between that Church and the Nazi government of Germany during the second World War by way of introduction to the present struggle. Following this is a general look at the protagonists with particular emphasis on the position of the Catholic and Orthodox churches in Russia proper. Each satellite country of Russia is then taken up individually and the struggle as it manifested itself in each is reviewed historically. Particular attention has been given to Cardinal Mindszenty in Hungary and Archbishop Beran in Czechoslovakia. A briefer examination is made with respect to Albania, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Poland.

In his acknowledgment the author says,

> This work, to be sure, is primarily concerned with the persecution of the Catholic Church, but its purpose, as I intended it, is to outline the current deadly struggle between all Christianity and Communism,

and he makes reference to this throughout the book. Now I have no doubt at all that this is true. That Communism is a foe of religion. I would not quarrel with this, and even if I felt so inclined it would be a difficult thesis to refute. He presents a distressing picture of religious conditions in Russia and her satellites. It is good that he has focused attention on this struggle, and it is particularly good that he has done so in an extremely readable manner. Therefore, to criticize this book is possibly dangerous, and this potential of danger points up the very weakness of the book. For it has been written with such a strong predilection for the position of that Church that to do anything but accept the white as white and the black as black will, in many sources, be interpreted as sympathy for Communism. If you accept the conclusion that there is a struggle then, due to the structure of the book, you must accept also the conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church is the principal representative of Christianity and that it is right not only with re-

spect to the struggle but also about everything else—a conclusion consistently rejected by very many persons. An objective and documented account of this struggle could supply valuable information to all Christians concerned over present and potential clashes with secular states. This is not that account.

JAMES S. SAVAGE

## THE EPIC OF KOREA

By A. Wigfall Green. Washington, D. C., Public Affairs Press. 1950. 136 pages. $2.50.

OBVIOUSLY this book has been written in anticipation of the country's demand to know something about the little known land where our armed forces are fighting. Unfortunately it shows that it was thrown together in a hurry. The style is frequently stilted and the story line is not coherent. This is particularly noticeable in the earlier chapters concerning the land, its people, and the historical background.

However, in the later chapters, where the author is writing about things he has experienced as an officer in the occupation forces, the quality of the writing is noticeably higher. Furthermore, the description of the debacle that was our occupation, and the castigation of our policies in Korea are something that this reviewer has not previously seen detailed in print. And these are things we should know.

JOHN W. REITH

## AMERICA'S SECOND CRUSADE

By William Henry Chamberlain. Chicago. Henry Regnery Company. 1950. 355 pages. $3.75.

THIS is a political history of American participation in the Second World War. It represents a point of view that has become widely current in recent years: that our entry into the War was largely manipulated by President Roosevelt and his advisers, that unnecessary and perhaps fatal concessions were made to Soviet Russia in the course of the War. But the author has more integrity than many a "revisionist" writer, asserting that war with Germany on the part of any of the Western powers was a mistake from the beginning. He asserts that there is still no evidence that Nazi Germany planned a conquest of Western Europe; indeed, that even after the fall of France, Hitler was ready to reach a *modus vivendi* with England. Both European and American statesmen should have assented to German eastward expansion. German conflict with Russia would inevitably have taken place, and a clear-cut victory of Germany or Russia might have been prevented by appropriate pressure on either nation at the proper time.

A more important contribution of Mr. Chamberlain's work toward a possible reassessment of America's role in World War II lies in its emphasis on *raison d'etat,* rather than ideology, as the proper basis for for-

eign policy. That, after all, is the implication of the word "crusade" in its title: we mistakenly fought our war for ideal values, not for concrete political ends. It was principally the devotion of F.D.R. and the American people to an uncritical liberal perfectionism that led them to conceive of the Axis powers as isolated evil forces and that blinded them to the dangers of a strengthened Soviet Russia.

Mr. Chamberlain's presentation is chiefly factual, eschewing lengthy theoretical analysis. That represents the limitations of his contribution to a re-evaluation of American foreign policy as illustrated in World War II. The position that he represents is a responsible and honest one, deserving of serious consideration. For a better understanding of the theoretical basis of that position, the reader would do well to study as a companion-piece Hans Morgenthau's *Scientific Man v. Power Politics.*

MARTIN H. SCHAEFER

## FICTION

### MOULIN ROUGE: A Novel Based on the Life of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

By Pierre La Mure. New York. Random House. 1950. 438 pages. $3.50.

THE Counts of Toulouse had been grand seigneurs in the South of France since the days when Raymond IV led the Christian knights in the First Crusade. The handsome seven-year-old boy, precociously sketching a portrait of the Countess his mother at the château of Albi in 1872 listened to the family stories only absently as he concentrated on his drawing. His mother was planning the years at school that would develop her child into an able and good man—not a mere fashionable *bon vivant,* like her husband, who lived in Paris. But at ten the young scholar was struck down by an agonizing illness that stopped his physical development. Then, at fourteen, his bedridden body began to strengthen and change; but his growth was like that in a nightmare: his shoulders broadened, but his legs remained infantile; he was almost a midget and could hardly walk; his nose and mouth became repulsively ugly; without glasses he could see nothing; he was frequently in pain.

Realizing, at seventeen, that he could never lead a normal life, but refusing the existence of a wealthy invalid, he persuaded his family to let him retrieve the one positive value left him—his talent—and went to Paris to study art. Among the art students he was accepted as one of the "crowd." From then until his death at thirty-seven he produced a prodigious amount of work, living all the while a jumbled life in which aristocratic fastidiousness kept him fairly well afloat despite his miserable fruitless searches for affection. He moved by feverish turns in the highest society and in the lowest; he was acquainted with most of the artists and great worldly figures of

France. Before his tragic return to Albi to die properly, his remarkable drawings, paintings, and lithographs of the poor of Montmartre—the laundresses, policemen, cancan dancers, prostitutes—were awarded a place in the Louvre.

ALICE BENSEN

## THE FAR LANDS

By James Norman Hall. Brown & Co. $3.00.

SOME of James Norman Hall's previous novels were spun around long sea journeys. None of them contains as long a sea voyage as this story of the Tongans who journeyed for generations to find the far lands where dwelled the god Tane, the lover of peace. Here is an enthralling account of a great people determined to fulfill their destiny in constructive endeavor. Great shipbuilders, kindly and decent in their human relationships, the Tongans meet with difficulties through the years. First they are stranded on the island of Kurapo, the place of the Koros, worshippers of the god of war. Held in virtual slavery for many years, the Tongans succeed in building a fleet of canoes and finally escape. After incredible hardships they reach the peaceful and beautiful Far Lands of Maui (the Easter Islands?).

This epic journey weaves itself around the life of Maui, young leader of the Tongans, and his love for Hina, the daughter of the enemy chieftain. How this love unfolds amid the treachery and cruelty of their slave years is related in loving detail.

Your reviewer unhesitatingly recommends *The Far Lands* as the kind of novel to read on a cold winter's evening before a crackling fire. It will transport you to another world and will remind you once more that there were heroes and great people in the forgotten centuries in forgotten parts of the world.

## BICYCLE THIEVES

By Luigi Bartolini. Translated by C. J. Richards. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1950. 150 pages. $2.50.

IF YOU want to read hopeless talk, I could recommend no book more highly than this. The interminable search of author Luigi for his pet bicycle is a metaphor of almost ghastly proportion. That author Bartolini never found his bicycle goes, of course, without saying. His finding of the two-wheeler would have made this story purposeless and dull, which it certainly is not.

Luigi has a unique artistry for describing details preciously, for making the handlebars of a bike feel like the obelisks in Egyptian tombs. Whatever frustration you sense in the piddling quest for a vehicle, you cannot help loving Mr. Bartolini for at least daring to write a book about the business. While you are inclined to preach to the author about being so small, you admire him for being man enough to admit his smallness.

The whole adds up to a confusion of sweet taste of things and distrust of what Bartolini tries to say, and the book becomes therewith an exceedingly unpleasant experience. Stay away from it unless you believe in finding bikes or hope or whatever you're looking for.

## THE WISDOM OF THE SANDS

By Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1950. 350 pages. $4.00.

THIS strange parable is the last work to come to us from the gifted pen of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the French writer, poet, and aviator. De Saint-Exupéry had been at work on *The Wisdom of the Sands* —published in France under the title *Citadelle*—for five years before he disappeared during a reconnaissance flight over Southern France in 1944. He kept the manuscript with him constantly, writing and rewriting portions of this curious story of a legendary desert prince. He told his friends, "Compared with this writing all my other books are mere practice work."

One wonders whether many readers will share the author's opinion. The vein of mysticism which runs through *Night Flight, Wind, Sand and Stars,* and *Flight to Arras* grows swollen and turgid in *The Wisdom of the Sands.* The philosophy of the young ruler of the imaginary desert realm is often vague and obscure. When it is not, it is the cold, pitiless, and ruthless philosophy of the authoritarian.

# HISTORY

## THE RENAISSANCE

By George C. Sellery. The University of Wisconsin Press. Madison. 1950. 276 pages. $3.75.

DURING his academic career of forty-one years at the University of Wisconsin, George Clarke Sellery was successively professor of history, dean of the College of Letters and Science, and acting president. Now, in retirement, he has written this book "to straighten out historians and students of European history, who have been and still are bedevilled by the theory that the Humanists were responsible for the upsurge of European civilization in the so-called epoch of the Renaissance." The necessity for the re-presentation of this thesis is open to question, since Burckhardt's "cultural epoch" theory has been challenged and definitely modified by the work of Emile Gebhardt, Henry Thode, Troeltsch, Walser, and others. However, like the romantic view of the Middle Ages, an interpretation possessing the force and clarity of the Burckhardt-Voigt thesis will not die. Perhaps such studies as Sellery's are necessary to keep the broader picture before our eyes. He does not present a new theory, he attempts only to broaden our conception of the Renaissance by pointing to the contributions of the various European nations—their inventions, commerce, thought, art, etc.

The author has not attempted to write a history, but rather an essay in which he treats outstanding features of the era. His chapters are

clear, well-written, and carefully documented. In the chapter on philosophy, for example, he has achieved a fresh and lucid presentation of the work of the great medieval thinkers from St. Thomas to Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. His treatment of the work of Valla and Pecock on the Donation of Constantine, too, is lucid. To a considerable degree the book is an account of the work of illustrious men of the Renaissance.

So long as men will attempt to understand the present in terms of their past they will always find such studies of the great period of the Renaissance interesting and rewarding. ERNEST B. KOENKER

**HARVARD, Four Centuries and Freedoms**

By Charles A. Wagner. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc. 1950. 326 pages. $5.00.

A LITTLE more than a decade ago the widow of Lucius W. Nieman, a Milwaukee publisher, provided a grant for the education of journalists at Harvard. The practice has been to call working newspapermen for a year in the Harvard Yard. Charles A. Wagner was one of the recipients and served his year as a Nieman fellow. Out of his associations at Harvard grew this book which attempts, rather briefly, to interpret Harvard in the light of its past three and oncoming four centuries and the Four Freedoms. Very little new material about Harvard is presented, but there is an attempt to trace traditions and developments through the more than 300 years that that school has functioned. Considerable attention is paid to the "greats" of Harvard both on the faculty and among the students. Some excellent photographs and drawings are included.

This is a special sort of book, and I suspect that it will not have much appeal outside of the circle of Harvard alumni. In attempting to cover so much ground in a rather short number of pages Wagner used a skip-and-run selective process with respect to what he would include and who he would identify. The result may well be incoherent to anyone not at least somewhat familiar with Harvard. His manner of expression is somewhat quaint, and an evident nostalgia for an institution that he never really attended results in considerable sentimentality at the least. He notes with respect to a co-fellow,

> Staunch Republican Waring, who had left his absentee-vote in Littleton, Colorado, for Dewey, had been assigned to Adams House, Westmorly B-27 as his residence. It was the suite in which Roosevelt (F. D.) had lived, and when the Adams House janitor told him this, Waring was quietly impressed. No one else knew; only the janitor. When Waring left Harvard in the spring of 1945 he was an ardent Roosevelt supporter.

Now it does not seem unusual that this Waring (or anyone for that matter) should have been an ardent Roosevelt supporter, but that he should have *become* such as a result of living in F. D. R.'s old room strikes me as being somewhat unique. Yet it is nothing to the uniqueness

of this book and its author. Waring was not the only one impressed. Someone told Mr. Wagner that he was in Harvard and he was visibly impressed and left it more than an ardent supporter; he left it a lover. It may not be very nice to say but it strikes me as though Mr. Wagner has written his *apologia* for not having attended Harvard in his college years (the dust jacket reports him a Columbia A.B.!). If you are a Harvard fan this is for you. JAMES S. SAVAGE

### THE PAGEANT OF RUSSIAN HISTORY

By Elizabeth Seeger. Longmans, Green and Co., New York. 1950. 433 pages. $4.50.

IF THERE is to be understanding among nations, the world's peoples must first know how their neighbors live and why they think as they do. Americans consider themselves to be the best educated and the best informed people in the world and yet because of a constant barrage of propaganda and a lack of factual knowledge of inside Russia they have many misconceived ideas about her and her people.

Elizabeth Seeger provides an objective insight into Russian history from the time of the Slavic invasion of Europe to the close of World War II in her new book, "The Pageant of Russian History." This book indicates why Russia thinks and acts as she does today.

For example she shows that violence has been the lot of Russian people throughout history. In just a twenty-five year period the Russian people suffered world war and revolution, civil war and famine, class war and famine, the sacrifices demanded by the Five Year Plans, and the purge. She shows to the more fortunate Americans (after some 175 years) that other peoples (after some 1900 years) have not had such an easy time maturing.

One usually thinks of history books as being dry and loaded with hard to remember facts. This book is not one of those. It is very readable, written more like an adventure story. One doesn't have to read many pages to realize that the Russians are people not too different from other people.

Author Seeger has provided a better than average index and a good list of readings for more detailed study.

The book is appropriately bound in red.

## HUMOR

### LAUGHTER INCORPORATED

By Bennett Cerf. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. Garden City, New York. Country Life Press. 1950. 191 pages. $1.50.

LAUGHTER INCORPORATED contains the cream of the recent crop of humorous stories and anecdotes designed to turn the average American away from modern day worries and threats of destruction by atomic bombs, inflation, mounting taxes, caterwauling commentators, and the incessant clamor of radio and television commercials. The author, Ben-

nett Cerf, attempts to guide him back, if only momentarily, to the funny side of the street to keep him from blowing his top altogether.

There are dozens of "joke books" published every year. *Laughter Incorporated* is one that steps on no toes, tickles some funny bones, and helps detour Mr. Gloom from your door—and the wolf from the author's.

H. H. KUMNICK

## RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

### FIFTY YEARS WITH THE GOLDEN RULE

By J. C. Penney. New York. Harper & Brothers. 1950. 245 pages. $2.75.

THIS is the spiritual autobiography of a lad who grew up in a home of deep religious faith and behavior. His one absorbing ambition was to be a successful businessman. His first venture flourished; from an unpainted store at the edge of a mining town in the state of Wyoming J. C. Penney found himself at the growing edge of one of the first "chains" of dry goods stores in American life. Absorbed in building a business, he thought he would like to be worth $100,000 some day; when he reached that, he set his sights on $1,000,000. The business chase became more exciting, but J. C. Penney's spiritual capital was not paying dividends. So Mr. Penney tells how he learned the use and power of prayer, how to give of himself in the spirit of humble service.

The reader will find many common denominators of human experience in *Fifty Years With the Golden Rule.* This book will be of continuous inspiration to all—to the young man entering the business world and to the older man casting about for creative ways in which to spend his "graduate years." "The years of childhood through school were the most important in my life," says J. C. Penney, "because in those years my parents, by their own moving example and patient admonition impressed on my mind the greatest lesson known to man: 'Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' " There is not a dull page in the entire book.

H. H. KUMNICK

### ONE MOMENT PLEASE!

By James Keller, M.M. New York. Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1950. 365 pages. $2.00.

ONE MOMENT PLEASE! the latest Christopher book by Father Keller contains brief one-page human interest stories with moral sentences and ethical challenges for each day of the year. Father Keller is the founder of the Christopher movement, a Catholic movement embracing a group of people whose aim is to develop a deep sense of personal responsibility and initiative in bringing back into everyday living the major truths which guarantee peace for all mankind. Father Keller feels that less than one per cent of humanity has caused most of the

world's recent major troubles. The aim of the Christophers is to get another one per cent to go as apostolic workers, as Christophers or Christbearers, and strive with missionary zeal to restore the fundamental truth which the other one per cent are working furiously to eliminate.

Like the author's *Three Minutes a Day,* countless thousands of so-called little people will find *One Moment Please!* profitable reading. Perhaps the greatest value of these daily challenges lies in the moral interpretation of practical everyday occurrences. The author knows how to interpret real life stories and occurrences. His prayerful wish is to make them inspirational reading for others. At times one gets the uneasy feeling that its challenge borders more on work righteousness than on God's grace in Christ Jesus. The book is well worth-while.

H. H. KUMNICK

## THE CHRISTIANITY OF MAIN STREET

By Theodore O. Wedel. The Macmillan Company. New York. 1950. 112 pages. $2.00.

THEODORE O. WEDEL, an Episcopalian clergyman, has built a reputation as preacher, lecturer, and author. Both his recent *Coming Great Church* and the present volume have been selections of the Religious Book Club. His writing is lucid and forceful, free of the technical terms and references which usually dot books on these subjects.

Canon Wedel is describing the "religion of democracy" which one encounters on Main Street. It is a religion of moral ideals: these ideals, e.g., brotherhood, peace, respect for the individual, etc., have grown out of the Christian tradition, but they now repudiate their roots in doctrine and historic Christianity. One is dealing, therefore, with a new religion which feeds, to a great extent, on religious illiteracy. Wedel calls it, for the sake of description, "humanist Christianity" to distinguish it from "classical Christianity."

One could say that the book is a preaching of the Law, for Wedel is describing the insufficiency of a religion which does not know the Law. He is doing the same thing Barth did a generation ago in thundering against the humanism of European churches. But American churches have been far more devoted to this teaching and have reexamined themselves less than European Christianity.

The special merit of Wedel's little book is that it not only accurately describes the situation but it also points to inadequacies and offers direction; criticism and reconstruction like this is a great service to Christ and His Body, the Church. One wonders to what extent has this residual Christianity of self-sacrifice and brotherliness pervaded Protestantism in America? Further, if we are not to capitulate, will we be willing to undergo the discipline and pay the price for religious literacy?

ERNEST B. KOENKER

## OTHER BOOKS

### THE ANIMAL KINGDOM OF ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Translated and edited by Charles R. Joy. Beacon Press, Boston. 1950. 207 pages. $3.00.

IN THIS book Joy, who is intimately acquainted with Schweitzer, provides an excellent opportunity for one to get an insight into this many-sided personality. Joy has made a very readable translation of the selection of writings chosen, some appearing in English for the first time. He also includes a helpful introduction, photographs taken by him, and a sketchy but complete biography.

The first section tells of Africa, "the animal's continent, where man is the intruder." There are spine chilling, and sometimes terrifying, stories about the constant struggle between man and the animals, the insects, and the jungle.

The second section takes up "Animals and Ethics." "Schweitzer traces the development of ethics in India and China, and criticizes the lack of a sufficient ethic in the West." Schweitzer's philosophy of "reverence for life" doesn't allow him to hurt or kill as much as an ant unless he has to. This problem never engages American thought, but one would suppose that a Christian nation should at least consider it. "Schweitzer is well aware that he has not solved the riddle and that he himself is compelled at times to hurt and kill, but woe unto us if we needlessly hurt and kill."

In the last section Schweitzer discusses his position on ethics, and provides the key to understanding his philosophy of "reverence for life" and also to many of his other writings.

I am one of those who spent their youth in a peaceful and affectionate environment. In later life I have enjoyed so much good fortune that I should deserve to be included amongst criminals and misfits if I did not try in some fashion to share part of my good fortune and happiness. — COUNT FOLKE BERNADOTTE

# The READING ROOM

*By* THOMAS COATES

## The Oregonian

AT THE risk of sounding somewhat parochial, we cannot escape the urge to make this month's column pretty much of an Oregonian affair—and we mean that in both the geographical and journalistic sense of the term. On our campus an unwonted quiet has descended, now that it's vacation time, and outside—as usual—a warm and gentle rain is falling. It gives us time to reflect, in a bit more leisurely manner than the incessant grind of the daily routine usually allows, upon the happy circumstance that in these latter days made an Oregonian out of us.

It's a great place, this Oregon Country, and one thing that has made it great is *The Oregonian,* which has become as indispensable a part of our daily breakfast ritual as the inevitable orange juice and coffee. Over the years *The Oregonian* has attained the distinction of being one of the nation's truly great newspapers. Its supremacy over the entire journalistic field west of the Rockies will hardly be disputed. Its influence far exceeds even its handsome circulation figure of 219,442. Its journalistic integrity and editorial brilliance have made it the foremost spokesman of the Pacific Northwest, and it has been a major factor in both molding the character and promoting the development of this region.

At any rate, this has been an eventful month for *The Oregonian.* First off, it celebrated its centennial with a mammoth edition, entitled "One Hundred Years of Headlines." To read this issue is to see how closely *The Oregonian* has been associated with the growth and expansion of the Northwest. These pages, too, make it easy to understand why, in 1940, *The Oregonian* won the University of Missouri's "distinguished newspaper" award as "more than a city newspaper—a tradition in the Northwest and a part of the life of the region." After a century of publication, *The Oregonian* today is at the very height of its influence and prestige. Significantly, through all

these years, *The Oregonian* remained a home-owned, independent newspaper.

Until last week, that is. For the paper's centennial anniversary week was not yet over when, with all the impact of a bombshell bursting over this staid metropolis, came the news that *The Oregonian* had been sold—and, of all things, to an Eastern newspaper tycoon, one Samuel I. Newhouse. Portlanders stirred uneasily, and cast apprehensive glances in the direction of Broadway and Jefferson Streets, half-expecting to see *The Oregonian's* ultra-modern plant tilting slightly on its foundation. They turned nervously to the editorial page—long the paper's crowning glory—to see whether its staunch Republicanism had degenerated overnight into the Fair Deal party line (for after all, Portlanders told each other with a shudder, this new owner was a *Democrat,* wasn't he?). The rival *Oregon Journal* arched its eyebrows in unfeigned wonder. The potent City Club booked the paper's city editor for an *apologia* entitled "The End of an Era," in which he sought to reassure the faithful that there would be no change whatsoever in the editorial policies or the journalistic standards of the paper.

As of this writing, Portland's fears have been allayed and its reproaches silenced. *The Oregonian* looks just as respectable as it ever did. Apparently it is not going to be made into a chain newspaper, after all, nor—still more horrendous—will it forsake the Republican party. In fact, if the truth were known, Portlanders feel just a mite proud of the fact that their favorite newspaper was considered a valuable enough property "back east" that somebody was ready to lay $5,000,000 cash on the barrelhead for it.

## A Good Place to Live

AT LEAST that is what Portland's famed author, Richard L. Neuberger, thinks of his home town. In the *Saturday Evening Post* for December 16 he tells why he feels as he does ("My Home Town Is Good Enough for Me"). It is clear that he loves his native bourne, "where the alpine firs march like a green-clad host up Mount Hood's glacial apron."

Citing the fact that he had received a number of tempting offers to more lucrative positions in the East, Mr. Neuberger recalls the advice that William Allen White, the "sage of Emporia," once gave him in a letter:

> "My advice instinctively is don't go East. Make your name out West. You will find a place out West. As you live longer, you will find that from sheer geography your standing there will be higher up above your surrounding plain than in New York. If you can

eat with some regularity, and sleep at night, stick to the West."

The author frankly admits that he wants to stay in Portland because he feels that he "belongs" here. Anywhere else he would have to make a new start, acquire new friends, cultivate new loyalties—in a word, to "belong" is better than to be rich.

I may be provincial, but aren't we all? A few years ago a newspaper syndicate conducted a symposium under the heading: What I Like About America. Every preference, without exception, was local. People in Seattle nominated Mount Rainier. Bostonians whooped it up for planked steak at the Parker House. A girl in Brooklyn picked the Dodgers. A Miami resident selected bathing beauties. Californians named Yosemite or the Golden Gate. I chose the Columbia Gorge with its bastions of lava and granite.

At any rate, we are glad that Mr. Neuberger feels that way about Oregon. Not only as a versatile and gifted writer, but as a State senator of courage and integrity—probably destined for higher office—he is making an important and colorful contribution to this entire region. Things around here would not be quite the same without him.

## Reed College

CONTRIBUTING further to Portland's fame is a unique school of higher learning—Reed College—whose stature has increased out of all proportion to its size and geographical location. "The Life and Times of Reed College" form the subject of an interesting article in the October *American Mercury* by another Portland author, Stewart H. Holbrook.

One does not have to live in Portland long to discover that Reed is one of the most controversial issues in the City of Roses. As the author puts it, "Reed is either quite wonderful, or simply dreadful; it has never been charged with mediocrity."

Those who think that Reed is "wonderful" point to its remarkable scholastic record. Despite its limited enrollment—currently about 700—one in every 123 of its graduates has become a Rhodes Scholar, as against a national average of one in every 4,500. Its physics department ranks with those of Columbia, Johns Hopkins, and Princeton. It ranks fifth, nationally, in the percentage of students who go on to receive Ph.D. degrees in the natural sciences. It is one of the few liberal arts colleges from which M.I.T. admits transfers, after the junior year, without examination. De-emphasizing athletics, it seeks to attract students on the basis of brains rather than brawn. Its faculty—in the words of a recent president—"is not excelled anywhere." All this serves to account

for the fact that today almost half the student-body comes from outside Oregon.

On the other hand, those who regard Reed as "simply dreadful" throw up their hands in horror at its "radicalism." Atheism and communism are among the charges that have been hurled at it. Reed was founded upon the principles of independent thought and free inquiry. But, in the opinion of President E. B. MacNaughton—who is also, believe it or not, president of *The Oregonian,* chairman of the board of Portland's First National Bank, and a former national moderator of the Unitarian Church—this is a far cry from radicalism. He said recently:

"If we are to accept a definition of radical as including any defense of civil liberties or expression of opinion not favorable to the existing economic order, then I shall not attempt to defend Reed College against the charge of radicalism. Reed is devotedly all-American from its grass roots."

## The New Mercury

SPEAKING of the *American Mercury,* the pocket-sized monthly made famous by Henry L. Mencken in the 20's has changed hands. In one of the major journalistic developments of the past year, the *Mercury* was taken over by a new team, with Clendenin J. Ryan as publisher and William Bradford Huie as editor. In their initial issue in December, both publisher and editor set forth the journal's future policy. Mr. Ryan dedicates himself to the grinding of public axes, "in behalf of good government, bold defense of our free American institutions, realistic pro-American policies in our foreign affairs." He also professes himself as being "eager to give creative writers and thinkers, especially younger people, the right of way to the public mind."

The statement of the new editor, Mr. Huie, is couched in brash and iconoclastic terms which are reminiscent of the old *Mercury* under Mencken, and in striking contrast to the more sober and conventional approach of its recent editor, Lawrence Spivack. Denouncing "tolerance" as a sacred cow, he cries:

There is now far too much "tolerance" in America. The tolerance racket is more deplorable than the numbers racket. We shall cry a new crusade of intolerance. Not racial intolerance nor the intolerance of difference, but the intolerance of bores, morons, world-savers. . . .

He inveighs against the cult of the "common man":

There is an aristocracy among men: an aristocracy of will, work, intelligence, and character. On them depends whether the human procession advances or retreats. So instead of encouraging young Americans to relax

and enjoy their commonness, we shall invite them to strive again.

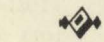
He is against "happiness," too:

The new *Mercury* is opposed to happiness, and no cultist should interrupt his incantations long enough to read us. The happiest creatures in the world are pigs lying in a wallow.

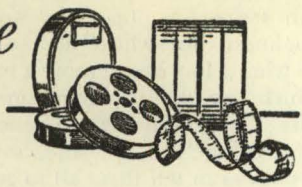
And there is probably a good deal of truth in this:

There is need in this country for a monthly, meditative magazine of free discussion. A magazine which can strive for objectivity and thoroughness, but which does not have to trim before any censor; a magazine which can tell the government censors, the pressure group censors, the advertising censors, the subscriber censors—can tell them all to go censor themselves.

This all adds up to an interesting journalistic formula. We wonder how well it will work.



All contemporary writers share to some extent the contemporary outlook—even those, like myself, who seem most opposed to it. Nothing strikes me more when I read the controversies of past ages than the fact that both sides were usually assuming without question a good deal which we should now absolutely deny. . . . We may be sure that the characteristic blindness of the twentieth century—the blindness about which posterity will ask, "But how *could* they have thought that?"—lies where we have never suspected it, and concerns something about which there is untroubled agreement between Hitler and President Roosevelt or between Mr. H. G. Wells and Karl Barth. — C. S. Lewis, Introduction to St. Athanasius' *The Incarnation of the Word of God* (Macmillan, 1947)

# *The*  *Motion Picture*

THE CRESSET *evaluates one of the world's most powerful forces*

HAVE you ever wondered what would happen if a qualified anthropologist turned a searching eye on movies and movie-makers? If you have, you can find the answer in *Hollywood, the Dream Factory* (Little, Brown & Co.).

About two years ago Hortense Powdermaker, associate professor of anthropology at Queen's College, went to Hollywood to study the mores of the film capital. *Hollywood, the Dream Factory* presents the conclusions drawn by Dr. Powdermaker during her year-long study of Filmland. The erudite author has set down her findings with ruthless candor. Bosley Crowther, film editor for the *New York Times,* declares that Dr. Powdermaker "wades into Hollywood's folkways with the punch of a heavyweight champ."

Dr. Powdermaker indicts the motion-picture industry on many counts. She believes that it is ruled by "men who play God"; that there is within it a basic insincerity and an instability that breed greed, fear, and subservience; that Hollywood is dominated by dictators who usually lack taste, honesty, and skill; that Hollywood's curious and unwholesome social system is responsible for the type of films produced by the industry.

Mr. Crowther emphatically refutes the last of these charges made by Dr. Powdermaker. He says:

> The fact is that the nature of our movies—immature and synthetic, by and large—is compelled, through top-level pressure, by the characteristics of the system of selling American films. Fundamentally, it is a mass-audience system; it is geared to large theaters that must be pretty well filled to show profits. A whole complex of considerations results.
>
> And it is these considerations—commercial, opportunist and generally narrow—which have been transmitted by the film-makers and have brought about "Hollywood." The demands of the theater-operators have for thirty years conditioned the supply. Dr.

Powdermaker has it backwards. She puts the turkeys before the eggs.

Although *Hollywood, the Dream Factory* has many excellent qualities, it is largely a superficial study of a highly complex industry. Incidentally, this is only one of several new books devoted to the movies. Next month I shall tell you something about Gilbert Seldes' fine volume, *The Great Audience* (Viking Press).

A little more than six and one-half years ago the Allied Nations launched a concerted attack against the French coast. *Breakthrough* (Warners, Lewis Seiler) salutes the heroic men who spearheaded the invasion of Normandy in June of 1944. The camera follows one infantry platoon from the training grounds of England to the landing on Omaha Beach and through the bitter days of bloody combat in the hedgerows to the ultimate capture of Saint Lô. *Breakthrough* closely follows the pattern set by *Battleground,* but lacks the unadorned realism which made *Battleground* a memorable and distinguished picture. Excerpts from authentic combat films, skillfully woven into the action, have a special poignancy in these grim and anxious days when the world seems to be headed for another holocaust. David Brian, John Agar, and Frank Lovejoy head a fine cast.

*King Solomon's Mines* (M-G-M, Compton Bennett and Andrew Marton), adapted from H. Rider Haggard's novel, is a fascinating picture. Its fascination lies, not in Mr. Haggard's reworked and expanded plot, but in the magnificent technicolor photography. Hollywood players and contrived play-acting are over-shadowed by superb presentations of primitive native tribes, African wild life, the African veldt, and the jungles, deserts, plains, and mountains of the Dark Continent. Stewart Granger, Deborah Kerr, and Richard Carlson are the principals in a well-chosen cast. Box-office receipts during the first months of the film's run indicate that *King Solomon's Mines* may be one of the biggest money-makers in the history of the industry.

M-G-M has brought to the screen another well-loved adventure yarn. This is Rudyard Kipling's exciting story of the boy Kim and of his part in Indian intrigues. Much of *Kim* was made on location in India. Here, too, superb technicolor photography compensates for a number of shortcomings. Dean Stockwell is excellent as the boy Kim. He is ably supported by Errol Flynn and Paul Lukas.

In the fall of 1949 *The New Yorker* published John McNulty's hilarious account of the tribulations which befell the winner of a

national radio jackpot. Now Mr. McNulty's delightful story—based on the experience of a friend—has been made into an amusing comedy. *The Jackpot* (20th Century-Fox, Walter Lang) stars James Stewart and Barbara Hale as the "lucky" couple whose home is inundated by $24,000 worth of merchandise.

*Never a Dull Moment* (RKO-Radio) belies the claim made in its title. It is full of dull moments. Irene Dunne and Fred MacMurray feverishly belabor a theme which was not very funny even when Mr. MacMurray and Claudette Colbert used it long ago in *The Egg and I*. Miss Dunne is an experienced and talented actress. She must know that her prestige will not be enhanced by stupid slapstick antics.

Another veteran of the stage and screen is grotesquely miscast in a recent release. *The West Point Story* (Warners, Roy del Ruth) actually stuffs forty-six-year-old James Cagney into a West Point uniform. How ridiculous can one be? The producers of *The West Point Story* have advertised the picture as a "star-spangled salute" to the West Point Cadets. Actually it is regrettable that this historic institution should be used as background for a tawdry fabrication.

*The Next Voice You Hear* (M-G-M, William A. Wellman) develops a delicate theme. Joe and Mary Smith, a typical American couple in a typical American community, are startled to hear a voice break into a radio program with this announcement: "This is God. I will be with you for the next few days." This amazing message brings about many changes in many lives. Director Wellman's sensitive direction keeps the action within the bounds of propriety and good taste. James Whittimore and Nancy Davis play Joe and Mary Smith with commendable simplicity.

Glamor gals have a way of turning up in the most unexpected places—and pictures. Who would have expected to see Hedy Lamarr in a horse opera? But there she is in *Copper Canyon* (Paramount), a mediocre technicolor epic set in the turbulent period just after the War Between the States. Miss Lamarr is supported by upper-crust celebrities in this inane adventure.

Glamor Gal Maureen O'Hara emotes her way through *Rio Grande* (Republic, John Ford), another in the long list of current "historical" pictures. Director Ford can always be counted on to produce a good show. But *Rio Grande* falls far short of his best efforts.

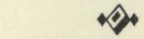
Fred Astaire and Betty Hutton are co-starred in *Let's Dance* (Paramount), a dreary, noisy, and cumbersome story of a war widow's fight to retain custody of her small

son. Mr. Astaire's dancing feet retain their magic, and Frank Loesser's songs are gay and tuneful. Otherwise this is a good example of what Mr. Crowther means when he talks about "turkeys."

*I'll Get By* (20th Century-Fox) leans heavily on big-name variety acts and on tunes that were popular a decade ago.

*The Milkman* (Universal-International) is a cheerful, unpretentious, and reasonably entertaining musical film tailored to fit the talents of Jimmy Durante and Donald O'Connor.

Here are two stock thrillers: *Highway 301* (Warners), a picture which does not live up to an impressive introduction, and *The Lucky Stiff,* produced by Jack Benny, directed by Lewis Seiler, and released through United Artists.



I remember when I was a very small boy my mother used to forbid me to go out when it was raining. My mother was a very quiet woman, who never spoke unless it was to figure out how long it would take to reach the nearest star by train.

"Nipper," she would say to me on such days as the rain would prevent my going out, "Nipper, I guess you don't know that thousands of years before modern civilization there was a period known as the Pluvial or Lacustrine Period, the rain or pond period."

I remember my crying myself to sleep the first night after she told me about the Pluvial or Lacustrine Age. It seemed so long ago—and nothing to be done about it. — ROBERT BENCHLEY, "The World of Grandpa Benchley," *Inside Benchley* (Harper and Brothers, 1942)

# Three Poems

*by* ROBERT EPP

## Hwang Ho

Ember days:
For the timid doe, the saffron sampan
Wading in mud delays.

Lent and ashes pole downstream,
Wind-sterile droop sails
In Time's quackery—so sincere.

Let charlantry die
In sackcloth's somber festivity;
Let God become blood and gall
Crossed on straw: these must be.

Time bows to no tear,
Only striving.

## Puzzles

Hot squeezing hands
clutched a heart pressing pain
as only fingers could
What friend would part life
from these soul seined words
Ink's tongue flaps thicker than mine
numb from papering
unfit to finger my loss of friends

I aimed for an albatross
but lost

## Sic

They send
    syllogisms to Nirvana
    prolegomena to Tao's last mile
    ergo to Karma
and wash with Styxian
incongruities

Everything is voodoo voided
unreturned r. s. v. p.

    Non Sequitur
    Tommyrot
    Anathema

Respondeo
    Fine
    Give them their pablum
    Let's have Kant steak
    Well done

# The Editor's Lamp

PROBLEMS

CONTRIBUTORS

FINAL NOTES

THE continued worsening of the international situation raises questions about the effectiveness and future worth of the United Nations. It is for that reason that we thought that a summary of the organization's work up to now and an evaluation of its worth might be in place.

Mr. Riedel, a member of the department of political science at Purdue University, has been a close and sympathetic observer of the UN since its founding. His article is encouraging to those of us who still hope that some order can be brought out of the international chaos.

Mr. Marty, the second installment of whose study, "The Eye in the Catacombs," is published in this issue, is already known to our readers. Of his present series, he writes that he sends it off "with a gasp, crossfingers, and a prayer that it will hit—someone and somewhere." We join him in that hope.

Dr. Koenker, in his article "Christ the Revolutionary," emphasizes a point which we consider particularly important—that, as Nietzsche said, "the last Christian died on the cross." Since that time, the Christians so-called have been Christians-in-process rather than Christians-in-fact. No one is likely ever to accuse any of us of subverting much of anything. Evidently we would rather be members of the Gehenna chapter of the Optimists' Club than members of the white-robed company around the throne of the Lamb.

Robert Epp whose three poems appear in our verse section this month is new to the CRESSET and admits that he awaits our readers' verdict with some trepidation. Our conservative old soul, schooled in the Augustans, and the Victorians, finds it difficult to understand any poet more recent than Swinburne but we know that in poetry as in the rest of the arts the rigid adherence to traditional form is a mark of decadence and death.

Mr. Epp's poetry strikes us as an attempt in the right direction and we hope that its publication will encourage him to continue his writing. Our readers can help by sending us their reactions. which we will forward to him.